



King's Singers back in town

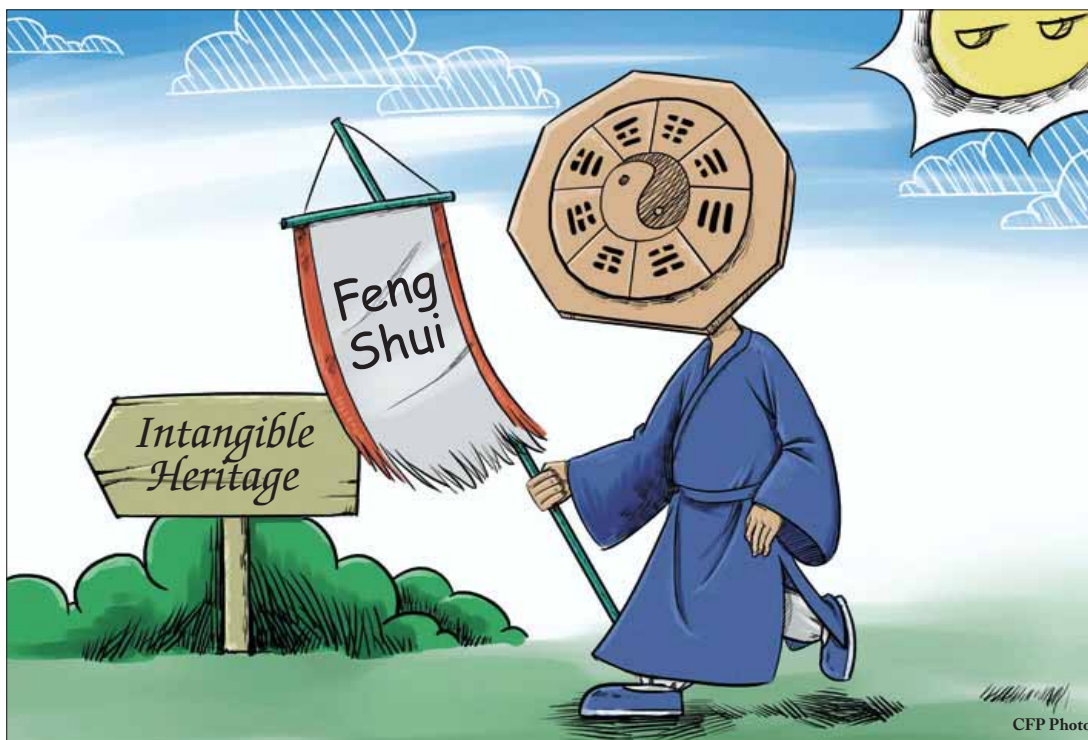
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Get creative with clay

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Long road for feng shui



CFP Photo

After the May 4 movement of 1919, China began to adopt Western science and democracy at the cost of its traditional culture and art. The *Book of Changes* and feng shui were casualties in a war of modernization.

While most Chinese people recognize both to be superstitious, they remain quick to embrace them as a way to skirt misfortune. But feng shui finds no such love on the desk of the Ministry of Culture, which is preparing an exhaustive list of China's intangible heritage for UNESCO.

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bring art to
delinquents

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imbalance
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More open policy adopted to attract foreign talents

Central authorities have initiated a more open policy to attract top-notch foreign talents to help promote the economic and social development and global competitiveness of the nation.

According to the newly unveiled National Medium and Long-term Talent Development Plan (2010-2020), the government will pass policies to offer incoming talents favorable taxation, insurance, housing, child and spouse settlement, career development, research projects and government awards.

It will also overhaul its system for granting permanent residence to foreigners, possibly through a skilled migration program, and work out measures to ensure a talent supply, discovery and appraisal system.

The national plan, a blueprint for creating a highly skilled

national workforce over the next decade, aims to transform the country from being "labor-rich to talent-intensive."

"The measures outlined are very attractive. They've touched upon various concerns of talents from overseas including personal and career needs," said Wang Huiyao, vice chairman of the Beijing-based China Western Returned Scholars' Association.

"The plan is practical and concrete compared with previous documents," said Wang, who helped draft it.

A program to hire 1,000 overseas top-notch specialists, began in late 2008, was incorporated into the new plan as one of its 12 key projects to be completed over the next 10 years.

As of last month, 662 people had been recruited under the program, which gives priority to lead-

ing scientists who are able to make breakthroughs in key technologies, develop high-tech industries and lead new research.

"It's preferable to import talents rather than capital or technology," said Xiao Mingzheng, director of the Human Resource Development and Management Research Center at Peking University.

"As China strives to adjust its economic growth pattern, it has become more important for it to tap others' brains," he said.

"The new policies reflect China's open attitude to personnel recruitment - that is, the country not only exports talents to serve the world but also enables foreign talents to serve China's development," he said.

The country's efforts to attract overseas talent have gone beyond the central government level.

The country recruited about

480,000 talents from foreign countries, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan last year, according to the State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs.

About 50,000 Chinese officials and professionals went overseas for various training programs last year.

"Top-notch talents are crucial for improving the core competitiveness of a country, a region and a company," Li Yuanchao, head of the Organization Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, said earlier this year.

"Not only should the central government earnestly carry out its talent recruitment program, but local governments should also develop its own programs to create conditions to allow talents to achieve," he said.

(Xinhua)

Seniors find nursing home alternative in apartments

By Li Zhixin

A new building complex for senior citizens in Tiangezhuan town, Miyun District, was completed by the Chinese Red Cross Foundation and Beijing Urban Construction Group last Sunday.

The facilities are intended to offer aged Beijingers an alternative to nursing homes and living with their children.

The 425 apartments provide a strong support network for seniors and a chance to stay connected with their families and communities, said Xu Jianyun, general manager of the construction group.

Apartments cost 15,000 yuan per square meter to purchase or 5,000 to 6,500 yuan per month to rent. Some are provided free to residents "who have made great contributions to society," Xu said.

Senior apartments were first available in northern Europe and spread to the US in the 1990s. Big cities like Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Dalian and Hangzhou are now starting to experiment with.

"With rapid economic development, improved living standards and changing attitudes, the market for senior apartments is growing," said Tang Jun, a researcher at the Institute of Sociology of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS).

China's population began aging in 1999, the effect of the government's Family Planning Policy instituted in early 1979.

There are 130 million people older than 60 who account for 10 percent of the total population. That figure will climb to 400 million by the middle of this century, at which time seniors will make up 28 percent of the population, CASS estimates.

The rapidly aging society is creating a new demand for geriatric care facilities such as nursing homes, senior apartments, charity houses and retirement communities.

"The purchasing power of the elderly is often underestimated. In fact, 43 percent of the urban elderly have considerable war chests. Nearly 6 percent of them are in the highest income bracket, and almost all of them think their current options are not good enough. High-grade apartments for the elderly will be a necessity," Tang said.

Although the construction of senior apartments is reviving the real estate market after it was swatted down by anti-speculation policies earlier this year, the homes are not without their problems, he said.

"These senior apartments are being built in places where urban planning is not even looked at. These current apartment complexes are located far from the residents' relatives and friends, and the fabulous environment and service do little to hide that failure," he said.

City studies how residents commute



Experts say urbanization creates serious bottlenecks in Beijing's traffic flow.

CFP Photo

By Han Manman

The Municipal Commission of Transportation will interview 50,000 families through September about their daily transport habits.

Conducted every five years, the study provides information for Beijing's next five-year development plan.

Families were randomly chosen from the 18 districts and counties under Beijing's municipal jurisdiction. Each family will answer questions including where they go on a typical day, what transport they choose to take and where they find their parking spaces.

In addition to the 50,000 families, another 1,000 volunteers will be given global-positioning equipment for one day so author-

ities can track their movements. "We need to know where the human 'tides' flow in the city," a commission expert told Xinhua. The results will be announced by the end of the year.

The commission is planning to create a website where citizens can submit information on their daily commutes. The website will also be accessible via mobile phone.

The study is the government's latest attempt to alleviate traffic congestion.

According to a report conducted by the Chinese Academy of Science (CAS) early this week, Beijingers have the longest commutes of any city dwellers in China, spending an average of one hour to and from work.

City commute times are followed

by Guangzhou, Shanghai and Shenzhen, with their commute times standing at 48 minutes, 47 minutes and 46 minutes, respectively.

The report quoted a survey on commuting times in 13 countries conducted by Regus, a British consultant company, which said Chinese commuters take an average of 42 minutes to get to work.

That is 19 minutes slower than US residents and 20 minutes slower than Canadians. The report quoted analysts as saying the longer commute time in China was caused by a dense population.

Niu Wenyuan, a researcher at the CAS who presided over the report, said the findings reveal many flaws in the city's public transportation system.

"Urbanization create comparatively serious bottlenecks in traf-

fic flow," Niu said, explaining that the time spent on the road shows that the country's transportation development has not kept up with urbanization.

The study on urban traffic and conditions, livability reflects an urbanization rate that is offsetting rural development, he said.

"Spending half an hour in some cities like Chengdu is not too bad but could be improved upon to catch up with international standards," Niu said.

Besides urbanization problems, Beijing has seen an influx of migrants who pack the metro system and vehicles that paralyze its roads.

More than 22 million people are living in the capital. The government's original development called for the population to be controlled below 18 million by 2020.

Pop artists educate Beijing's most troubled students

By Chu Meng

Guitarist Frank Wingold, drummer Joost Lijbaart and bassist Mark Haanstra form the Dutch jazz band Agog. The trio put on a dynamic pop show of their imaginative melodies on Tuesday.

But it was not another night at a Houhai bar: this time, the band's stage was Beijing Chaoyang Reformatory School, where delinquent teenagers receive special education.

Avant-garde concert

Early Tuesday morning, at Beijing Chaoyang Reformatory School, boys in school uniforms ran excitedly to the school performance hall.

The students live under military management. Their hair is cropped short, they are allowed no personal accessories or mobile phones, and are not allowed to move or gesture while they sit.

Inside the hall, the mostly-male student body of 400 sat as three tall European musicians took the stage.

During its one-hour performance, Agog played four of its latest instrumental pieces. The songs were carefully selected from their Shanghai and Guangzhou concerts and from Dutch music charts.

"We want them to learn what jazz is all about. These students deserve a chance to get a taste of the freshest music elements around today. One day when they leave the school, they should be as ordinary as anybody else," Joost Lijbaart said.

It was the band's first public welfare activity in China supported by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Youth League and Wu Promotion Company.

Agog has huge commercial value in the European jazz scene. It formed in September 2001 and won the Dutch Jazz Competition a year later.

Art essential

to student reform

The students are rarely shy. After the performance they took turns asking Agog's performers about jazz and the difference between bass and guitar. They even took the stage to sing Beijing Opera for the Dutch group.

"Our students never lack access to art. Art is one of the most important studies for delinquent students. We take them off campus to galleries, museums and to participate in charitable activities," said Zhang Meiling, president of the school.

Zhang said the school, established in 1978, provides the country's mandatory nine years of education to students with a record of juvenile crime or failure at ordinary middle schools. Most students are between the ages of 12 and 18.

There are only two reform schools in Beijing: the other is in Haidian District.

Each year, Beijing Chaoyang Reformatory School receives 150 students from Chaoyang,



After the performance, the three musicians received warm applause from the students.

艺术进校园——热烈欢迎荷兰艺术家到校演出



Dutch jazz band Agog performs its latest songs for students at Beijing Chaoyang Reformatory School. Photos by Zhang Ying

Chongwen and Changping districts. They are boarded by the school and made to follow military scheduling.

"Nearly three quarters of China's juvenile delinquents have left a trail of poor grades and missed classes before they became involved in crime," said Lu Qi, vice secretary of the Research Institute of Juvenile Delinquency China. She said poor grades and other unpleasant experiences at school drive many minor offenders toward delinquency.

"Some 40 percent of the young offenders said they cut school because they hated schoolwork and another 27 per-

cent said the pressure was unbearable," she said.

As grades are often a yardstick of student performance, those with poor grades tend to feel inferior and isolated.

Zhang said most juvenile delinquents admitted they did not do well in school, and nearly 80 percent of them never, or very rarely, were praised by their teachers: 41 percent said they were looked down upon by their classmates.

"In reform school, we avoid academics by emphasizing the arts. By kindling an interest in and talent for different art forms, we help those students to rebuild their confidence," Zhang said.

New ways to combat delinquency

"Children who are not doing well at school need friendship and spiritual support to relieve their pressure," Lu Qi said.

That thirst for friendship leads many youngsters into gangs.

Ordinary middle schools should reform their curriculum and teaching methods to reduce their academic burdens and improve their students' morale and creativity, he said.

"By participating in art activities, some isolated students might find spiritual support, establish new friendships and lessen the academic burden they feel inside the classroom. It is widely accepted that a naughty or unsocial child may turn into a wonder like Albert Einstein or Bill Gates," Lu said.

The number of delinquent students has grown as authorities clamp down on school security. There was a rise to 6.7 percent reported in 2009, said Sun Qian, a deputy procurator-general, at a recent meeting on juvenile delinquency.

Sun said most young offenders are involved in theft, robbery, kidnapping, blackmail or drug addiction and trafficking. Many are violent criminals, and some have committed rape or murder.

Peking, Tsinghua end their boat races

By Zhang Dongya

The annual boat race between Peking University and Tsinghua University is off this year. Followers have taken it as a sign that the 10-year competition is over.

Tsinghua and Peking, the most prestigious Chinese universities, began the outdoor competitions in 1999.

Boat races are used to test and train team spirit at prominent universities such as Oxford and Cambridge in the UK and Yale and Harvard in the US.

The leader of Peking University's boat-racing team, Shi Yunjia, said the universities began their competition in an attempt to emulate Oxford and Cambridge. They said they hoped it would boost the schools' images and improve communication.

The first race in 1999 was broadcast by CCTV.

Some years the teams competed in host cities such as Tianjin and Xiamen, Fujian Province.

To gain an advantage, both schools specifically recruited talented athletes as students and invited coaches to train them.

"Almost every class had one or two students who were there because of sports. Some would be selected for the boat race," Cindy Cui, a former Peking University student said.

Since boat racing is not a traditional sport in China, few Chinese students had the skills for it. Most of the students tapped for boat racing came from basketball programs. The coaches came from state-level boat racing programs.

Boats and coaches became a perennial expense, costing each school nearly 1 million yuan per year.

One reason boat racing is unpopular in China is that cost, said Guan Lei, a former member of Peking University's boat-racing team.

Guan said the least expensive Chinese-made eight-man boat costs 200,000 yuan: oars cost 4,800 yuan each.

Where to train is another problem: the schools would transport students to the suburbs for each training session.

Scandals such as ignoring race rules and the disqualification of players brought frequent humiliation to the schools.

This year, the schools stopped recruiting sports students for the race. But the boat-race teams still exist. Both schools described the future of the competition as "hard to say."

Official rejection may leave feng shui to Korea

By Zhang Dongya

While most Chinese people consider feng shui to be oracular and superstitious, they still believe in it as a way to avoid misfortune.

But that tune of acceptance is quick to change when feng shui lands on the desk of the Ministry of Culture, which is preparing an exhaustive list of China's cultural heritage to submit to UNESCO.

The United Nations group has long cataloged the world's intangible cultural heritage. But does popular Chinese pseudoscience qualify?

Officials at the ministry said only that experts were researching whether to nominate these traditional beliefs. Many interpret that as a positive sign, but professors of feng shui see it as an ill omen.

"It means it will not be approved," says Xu Kun, vice president and secretary-general of the Beijing Zhouyi Research Institute.



"People ask, Is it scientific? I try to explain the book was not written within the framework of science and Newtonian mechanics, but they just repeat the question."

Xu Kun

Photo provided by Xu Kun

Feng shui not for posterity

Tomorrow is China Cultural Heritage Day, a holiday established in 2006 to strengthen people's awareness of the need to protect cultural heritage.

Last week the Ministry of Culture released its list of intangible cultural heritage compiled following a nationwide survey. As many as 870,000 items were listed and split into four ranks: national, provincial, city and county heritage.

Feng shui was not on the list.

At the press release, deputy Director Wang Wenzhang told reporters the Ministry of Culture was still investigating whether to include feng shui on its list. While some traditional beliefs such as Mazu worship by coastal peoples made the list, Wang says these were included because they expressed good wishes and benevolence – not because they were superstition.

The country has successfully petitioned to have 22 items added to UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and three to its List of Urgent Safeguarding.

Book of Changes no better

Several commentators suggested that cultural preservationists should go in the back door by getting the *Book of Changes*, also known as *Zhouyi* or *I Ching*, included first.

While feng shui is uncomfortably tied to a time of swindlers and feudal superstition, the *Book of Changes* has much wider acceptance.

Beijing Zhouyi Research Institute, founded in 1993, is the only legal organization bearing the book's title in its name.

Tianjin established a similar organization in 2008 called the Tianjin Municipal Guoxue Research Institute. The Tianjin group studies Chinese culture, especially oracle bones, traditional medicine and the Four Books and Five Classics, which includes the *Book of Changes*.

The Zhouyi institute held a seminar in 2008 to summarize achievements in *Book of Changes* research during the last 30 years.

At the seminar, it promoted the idea that the book was an item worthy of intangible culture heritage status.

"The biggest obstacle we faced then and face today is that people cannot fit the *Book of Changes*



Some who make their living using feng shui or the Book of Changes are considered swindlers. The practice is banned around the country. CFP Photos



Korea claimed the Dragon Boat Festival as intangible heritage in 2005. Since then, many Chinese have felt their other traditional culture may be at risk.



in their business," Xu says.

This November, Xu's annual seminar on the book will focus on traditional Chinese medicine, specifically its relationship with the *Book of Changes*, a popular topic this year.

A challenger appears

The Republic of Korea's Ganjeung Danojie was recognized by UNESCO as an intangible heritage in 2005, cementing the country's claim to China's Dragon Boat Festival.

In its application to UNESCO, the South Korean government wrote: "(The) Duanwu Festival, which originated in China, has been celebrated by Korean people for over 1,500 years."

That loss was a wake-up call.

Last year, South Korea applied to claim feng shui as its own. Netizens on the Chinese mainland were quick to petition UNESCO to reject Korea's application.

With a tai chi symbol and the Eight Trigrams on its national flag, there is little question South Korea is deeply influenced by China's *Book of Changes*. It is a serious contender in the race to claim feng shui.

UNESCO does not recognize the same element of intangible heritage twice.

Authorities in Hubei Province submitted an application to UNESCO, re-nominating the Dragon Boat Festival as China's intangible heritage last year.

Their application contended that four components – including the customs in Qu Yuan's hometown in Zigui County and the boat race in Huangshi – make China's Dragon Boat Festival significantly different from Korea's.

But whether the government will submit its own application to claim feng shui remains unclear.

If a feng shui industry exists, the government says it is largely peopled by cheats and swindlers. The government officially classifies it as a superstitious system to judge luck and refuses to issue any official certificates to those engaged in its practice.

"If Korea gets it, it might not be all bad. They (the Koreans) would recognize it as culture and invest money to protect it. That could help sweep a lot of bad elements out of the industry so it can be passed on to future generations," Xu says.

Her voice rings with a tone of helplessness.

within a scientific framework," says Xu Kun, vice president of Beijing Zhouyi Research Institute.

"People ask, Is it scientific? I try to explain the book was not written within the framework of science and Newtonian mechanics, but they just repeat the question," she says.

"The book is a world view that can help us understand what happens around us."

After the May 4 movement in 1919, China began to push for Western science and democracy at the cost of traditional culture and art. The *Book of Changes* and feng shui were casualties of that war.

Xu says the best way to save the book and the culture around it is to teach it. She has been teaching classes on the *Book of Changes* since 1994, and was one of the first teachers to put it in the classroom with an elective course at Capital University of Economics and Business.

She also lectures on the book to entrepreneurs at the Euro-China International Business College.

"College students are able to accept new ideas and concepts, and entrepreneurs understand the role the *Book of Changes* can have

Sex ratio discrepancy declines

Baby steps to narrow gender imbalance

While news outlets tend to get hysterical about the country's gender imbalance problem, latest statistics suggest a much more optimistic view: in 2009, there were 119.45 male newborns for every 100 females, down from 120.56 in 2008.

Studies have also found discrepancies in census figures. Families shouldered with female children, instead of aborting them, merely choose not to declare them.

Girls make gains on boys

The annual male-female birth ratio in China slightly narrowed by 1.11 points to 119.45 boys born for every 100 girls last year, the first drop since 2006, a population official said on June 3.

The figure indicated the ratio of males to females was about 119 to 100 and the widening gender gap was slowing, Li Bin, director of China's Population and Family Planning Commission, told a work conference in Hefei, Anhui Province.

The country has seen the sex ratio at birth increasing since the 1980s and it has been recorded as high as 130 males for every

100 females in some provinces.

Chinese traditionally hold a preference for male heirs, especially in rural areas. Wider use of ultrasound and abortions has also caused the imbalance to increase significantly in recent years.

"Looked at from a comprehensive perspective, the lopsided sex ratio at birth has started to be contained," Li said.

She said it would take many more years to consolidate the trend, calling for more vigilance in rooting out pre-birth gender scans and abortions that do not serve a medical purpose.

(Agencies)

Expert

Discrimination creates gender-ratio imbalance

Experts have suggested more effective action against illegal pregnancy gender scans and discrimination of women so as to curb the sex ratio imbalance in China.

Zhai Zhenwu, dean of the School of Sociology and Population, Renmin University of China, said gender discrimination was the major cause of the problem. "An imbalanced sex ratio is widely found in the countries and cultures that favor boys," he said, adding that rural areas have reported the most serious sex ratio imbalance.

Chinese families prefer boys mostly because, traditionally, girls will leave the family after getting married and the parents will have no one to look after them in old age, Zhai said. "Adequate social security, especially a pension system in rural areas, will ease concerns about this issue."

Technically, widespread use of ultrasound scans during pregnancy has made gender scans easier and more accurate.

Although the country bans ultrasound scans to distinguish infants' gender, it still occurs. "Some private practicing doctors and small hospitals are providing this illegal service," Zhai said. "In recent years, the services have become very sophisticated and gender scans can be arranged at the client's home."

Yuan Xin, director of the Population and Development Institute of Nankai University in Tianjin, said stopping discrimination against women will help curb the sex ratio imbalance. "Chinese women still lag behind men in career development, political and family life, except for education level," he said. "If women's social status improves, parents will feel better about raising a female child."

A report issued by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences last December estimated that China's male population at marriageable age will be 24 million more than female counterparts in 2020.

(Agencies)



Discrepancies in census figures suggest a much more optimistic view on the country's gender imbalance.

CFP Photo

The third eye

Gender imbalance not as bad as we thought

By Huang Daohen

More than 24 million Chinese men of marriageable age could find themselves without spouses in 2020, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences said last year. But things are not as bad as they may seem.

While the female population lags in census figures, study shows there are girl babies hidden every year in order to get around the nation's birth-control policy.

One example cited by Britain's *The Daily Telegraph* is Fu Yang, a 47-year-old man

living in a small village outside Xiamen, Fujian Province. Fu said he had had seven daughters within 10 years.

To keep them, Fu said he had to flee across three provinces and hide some of the girls with friends, but "we have a decent respect for life. In China, we think that when you have a child it is like dropping a piece of your own body from you, and we never considered the other options."

What happens is that the unplanned baby girls usually do not get registered with the

authorities when they are born. Fu said the families would wait until they are 6 or 7 and by then, the local governments tend not to care as much.

While his family may be an extreme case, there is evidence to suggest that it isn't all that rare.

Liang Zhongtang, a demographer and former member of the expert committee of China's National Population and Family Planning Commission, found that people might be hiding roughly 3 million babies from

the government each year.

According to Liang's research, in 1990, the national census recorded 23 million births. But by the 2000 census, there were 26 million 10-year-old children, an increase of 3 million.

"Normally, you would expect there to be fewer 10-year-olds than newborns, because of infant mortality," he said.

Liang's findings suggest that the gender imbalance may not be as severe as the statistics suggest.

Visa blocks UnionPay

Payments dispute to affect consumers

By Huang Daohen

Visa International has asked its global financial institution members to stop allowing international transactions through China's UnionPay system starting August 1.

Many believe the dispute is connected to UnionPay's overseas expansion which threatens Visa's interests.



Visa will penalize banks that use China UnionPay to settle international transactions.

CFP Photo

Payments clash

Visa has told banks they must stop using the China UnionPay payment system to process international transactions for co-branded Visa and UnionPay credit cards.

Starting August 1, no Visa card transactions outside the mainland, including ATM cash services or card payments, will be allowed through the UnionPay system.

Hong Kong and Macau will be exempt. Visa said it will allow Chinese holders of dual-currency credit cards that include both its own and China UnionPay's pay services to use either service in Hong Kong and Macao.

Since Hong Kong and Macau make up a part of the country, purchasing items there with a credit card does not constitute an overseas transaction, the company's spokeswoman Liu Jie said.

The move comes as credit-card companies are becoming increasingly frustrated in China, where transactions must be conducted through the monopoly UnionPay.

Last week, Visa wrote to banks to remind them of operating regulations that require financial institutions to process international transactions outside China through Visa's system.

If banks did not comply with Visa's request, the card company said it would levy penalties of up to \$50,000 (\$340,000 yuan).

Reuters reported that Visa's decision followed talks Visa, American Express and MasterCard had with US trade officials in late March to discuss taking

action against China for shutting them out of its growing payment processing market.

In China, foreign groups are not allowed to issue their own credit cards or build networks to support such cards. Foreign companies like Visa are required to cooperate with Chinese partners to provide their services.

According to a report released by the country's central bank, the People's Bank of China, Chinese banks had issued 175 million credit cards at the end of the third quarter of 2009, of which 33 percent are accepted by the

holders' options for overseas payment channels."

UnionPay was established by China's central bank in 2002 and is owned by more than 80 state-controlled banks.

Consumers caught in fire

For mainland consumers, Visa's decision means cardholders will not be able to use Visa's global payment network through China UnionPay's system during overseas shopping trips.

This means they may have to pay 1 to 2 percent in money-exchange fees and face exchange-rate risks before paying back the money.

As Chinese tourism expands, the rising costs of some banks' Visa cardholders will hinder consumption, said Wen Yijun, analyst with Oriental Securities in Beijing.

Last year, Chinese tourists spent more than 287 billion yuan while traveling overseas, according to the Chinese Tourism Academy of the National Tourism Administration.

The amount of money Chinese travelers spend overseas is set to balloon with the growing middle class, Wen said.

There are also some Chinese credit cards that do not support payment by installment for foreign-currency transactions.

Wen said one solution to the situation is to vigorously promote the yuan single-currency China UnionPay credit cards to avoid restrictions from international cards.

But UnionPay's overseas service network is limited, he said.

Analyst

Fierce market competition

Experts say the reason behind Visa's move is simple: the dispute is a reflection of the fierce competition between two card issuers in both the overseas and domestic markets.

As China UnionPay accelerates the pace of the overseas expansion, it threatens its counterparty's interests, Wen said. Visa is trying to entrench itself as the world's dominant credit card company.

Under China's current rules, UnionPay holds a monopoly over the Chinese credit-card market. Foreign card issuers are restricted from doing business in Chinese, and global companies like MasterCard and American Express can only do business in the China market if they cooperate with UnionPay.

UnionPay's growth has been exponential, rocketing to 122 million cardholders from fewer than 50 million four years ago. Last year, the company completed 4.9 trillion yuan in transactions.

UnionPay also controls a portion of the world market by offering extremely low conversion rates for Chinese travelers. The company has expanded to 90 countries and profits heavily when Chinese travel overseas.

Visa's move reflects a degree of frustration with watching UnionPay's expansion, Wen said.

"It is clearly designed as a warning aimed to push UnionPay into discussions about opening up access to the Chinese market," Wen said.

If its push to keep UnionPay out of the global marketplace succeeds, Visa would not be taking too much of UnionPay's business. The company could be hoping it takes enough away to make UnionPay reconsider its stance on allowing other companies to operate within China, he said.

Wen's view was echoed by Zhong Wei, an economist with the Beijing Normal University, who said Visa hid its real motive: "Actually Visa aims at increasing its shares in the Asia-Pacific market and defending its dominance in the global market."

"The dispute is unavoidable," said Zhong, suggesting that China should open its bank card market and allow competitors to issue cards.

This would help develop the country's fast-growing bank card industry, he said.

Property still lures investment despite bubble

By Huang Daohen

China's real estate market continues to draw investment despite fears of a housing bubble, according to a recent report from property services firm Jones Lang LaSalle.

Michael Klibaner, head of research at the firm, sees plenty of reasons for optimism.

For every expat who complains about pollution, there are still some people in London who would like to be here, Klibaner said.

"I don't think you'd find many people who've made money betting against China," he said.

The market for luxury property in Beijing and Shanghai is seen as a little frothy due to speculation. Nonetheless, Klibaner said the commercial and office sector has been unaffected.

"It's really important to separate commercial from residential," he said. For residential property, Klibaner said the market is individually driven.

"On the commercial property side, it's a very professional market. That said, China's market for commercial and office space doesn't always obey market forces," he said.

According to Jones Lang LaSalle, Beijing office rents continue to rise despite high vacancy rates. Shanghai office rents jumped 4.9 percent just in the first quarter.

Referring to the government's policy to reign in the residential property market, Klibaner said a property tax is inevitable but not imminent.

The central government has restricted lending and made it harder for individuals to purchase second or third homes.

The policy, issued late last Friday, requires banks to ask for higher down payments and mortgage rates if one of the home-buyer's family members already owns property.

Klibaner said the current round of market-cooling measures had been effective, and he doubted further action would be taken in the near future.

"We have seen the end of this phase of tightening," Klibaner said. "The government has achieved its goals. It does not want to crush the market."

Even when a property tax is introduced, it may be limited to first-tier-cities like Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, he said.

Klibaner said the country's urbanization supports his optimistic outlook on residential property. Based on current trends, he said, an additional 80 million people will move to the cities by 2014; that number could reach 200 million by 2022.

"This is not Dubai. There is fundamental structural demand," he said.

Kowtow the best way to show gratitude?

By Zhao Hongyi

A high school graduation ceremony in Chongqing, in which students kowtowed before their teachers, is making people rethink the best way to express gratitude.

Last Saturday 900 graduates of Cunyang High School, gathered at the school playground for their commencement exercises and kowtowed to their teachers to express appreciation for their training and guidance. The bow lasted 30 seconds; the students got up only after the ceremony host said "thanks."

"Our teachers have given us a lot, not only teaching us but also nurturing us as individuals," said Chen Junwei, one of the students. "Kowtowing is not enough to express the extent of our gratitude."

The teachers were pleasantly surprised and moved by the gesture. "I was on stage at the time and broke down," Xie Zhangjin, a teacher of Chinese literature and

culture said. "It was the result of our efforts in teaching them about gratitude."

Zhang Hongquan, the school's director of administration, said "the students planned this on their own ... We did not ask them or force them to do this."

Zhang said it was not the first time Cunyang students kowtowed to express appreciation to their mentors, as their teachers have traditionally been close to students. "We'll continue this tradition," he said.

But some of the students were unhappy with the practice. Tan Fang, a student who graduated from Cunyang last year, told local media that "it was a group of students who kneeled down first, and all the others had to follow" during his graduation ceremony.

Some parents don't agree with the tradition either. "Yes, we Chinese have tremendous gratitude for our teachers," a father named Ran said, "but it's not nec-

essary to do this to show the students' respect and gratitude."

Kowtowing in recent years has not been confined to high school students. Realizing the importance of preserving traditional culture and seeing the downward spiral in morality, the government and the media have appealed for a return to traditional morals and behavior.

Ji Xiulin, a master of traditional Chinese culture who died two years ago, received a kowtow from one of his students who is now a professor in Shanghai. The professor's bow was shown on TV and elicited negative reactions from viewers.

Zhao Benshan, a popular comedian, requires apprentices to kowtow before they can be accepted, while Li Yang, host of the *Crazy English* teaching program, asks his students to kowtow before each class.

Background

Kowtowing came into practice during the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220), when it was used as a sign of courtesy when greeting people or during meetings. When receiving guests, people sat on a mat on the floor and bowed their heads with their palms on the floor. After the Han Dynasty, the practice evolved into people getting down on their knees from a standing position.

The practice lasted until the beginning of 20th century.

Comment

Not necessary

Cultural restoration does not necessitate a return to kowtowing to express students' gratitude to their teachers. It's better to be concerned with the essence of traditional culture rather than gestures.

— Xie Fanlin, professor at Peking University

Students have the say

I don't care much for what the students did. They can show their gratitude to their teachers in many other ways. Students should have been given the freedom to choose.

— Jessica, student at Beijing Foreign Studies University

Attitude over virtual

It's more important for teachers to tell students that when they enter the workforce, it's better to do your best to help others, rather than be concerned with rituals. Help

others and don't expect anything in return.

— Carina Bech, Norwegian expat in Beijing

Only a show

It was only for show, no matter what the teachers taught students about gratitude. The teachers should have returned to students the show of respect. What did they do?

— Zhang Nanzhi, commentator on qianlong.com

Find other way to gratitude

Another school, also in Sichuan Province, sold T-shirts with teachers' faces printed on them. Students could buy the shirts with the image of their beloved teachers or refuse to purchase anything. It was another way for students to express their gratitude, much better than kowtowing.

— Zhou Feng, student at University of International Business and Economics



Students kowtowed before their teachers at a high school graduation ceremony in Chongqing on June 5.

Photo provided by Chongqing Morning Post

Netizen's murder claims a hoax

By Wang Yu

A man in Jinjiang, Fujian Province, was arrested for murder last Friday after confessing on the Internet to killing his girlfriend. Police later discovered the claims were a hoax perpetrated out of boredom.

The man left a message on a Baidu bulletin board last Friday morning, saying he had accidentally killed his girlfriend in her dorm room and asked for advice about what to do with the body since visitors were expected to come at 11 am.

The message quickly became one of the most viewed posts on the site. Some netizens advised him to run away and hide, while others persuaded him to turn himself in. But there were also netizens who doubted the story's veracity.

The man posted his last

message at 10 am, saying those who did not believe him should watch out for the news on TV and that he was not bothered by the crime he committed.

Netizens reported the messages to the police, who began a manhunt. Officers found the man that afternoon, surfing the net at an illegal Internet cafe.

He turned out to be a 20-year-old migrant worker surnamed Yang, who went to the Internet cafe straight from night shift and made up the story for fun. Yang has no girlfriend and usually visits horror sites or watches scary movies after work. He says he is mentally healthy.

Based on the Law of People's Republic of China on Penalties for Administration of Public Security, Yang was ordered to be detained for 10 days.

Comment

Harmless joke that exposed regulatory flaws

I think this young man does not deserve to be detained. Please note that he made this post on the "horror bar" section of Baidu. It is a place that draws horror-story fans and he just did what he could do to attract followers — just like what fiction writers do on literature sites. Based on the news reports, it did not seem like his post caused chaos in the real world or harmed others. If we look at the law, I don't think it makes sense to put him in jail.

On the other hand, the case highlights the lack of laws pertaining to Internet use. Even the authorities

don't know which law to use when dealing with Internet-related cases.

— He Yuxin, magazine editor

Laws need to be updated

I think it is all right to be attentive to online posts. What if the netizen had really killed someone or was planning a murder? In Japan, the government amended related laws after a murder case in Akihabara, in which the killer wrote about his plan on his blog. This has helped the police prevent similar crimes.

Our laws are out of touch with the times. The regulations on which the authorities based his punishment are outdated. It's

much more complicated to assess wrongdoing done online.

— Cai Jingzhou, manager of sports company

A double-edged sword

The other netizens were right to call the police. They would have helped solve a big case if the post turned out to be real. The police should watch the Internet carefully for similar messages, but it also depends how they do the monitoring. As a private citizen, I don't want to give up my privacy by being watched every day. It's a dilemma for both Internet users and the authorities.

— Chris Stephenson, student from the US



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In search of 'legit' Beijing

Are foreign students getting the real deal?



Foreign students sample Chinese cuisine in a restaurant in Wudaokou. For many, this is as close to experiencing "real Beijing" as it gets. Photo by Yu Jingxue

By Janet Xiao

The names "Sanlitun," "Houhai" and "Wudaokou" are widely recognized by Beijing's foreign university students – even those who know only a handful of Chinese phrases. Famed for their dining and clubbing scenes, these areas form an essential part of the study-abroad experience, along with taking language classes and visiting tourist sites.

Partying enables foreign students to make friends and get comfortable with life in Beijing, but hanging out solely with foreigners prevents integration.

When in Rome?

Beijing Daily reported in April that 71,000 foreigners studied in Beijing last year, and the city aims to increase this number by another 10,000 this year. China's rapid economic development is making its capital a hot spot for foreign students seeking to learn Chinese or those who simply want to experience life overseas.

But aside from communicating with shop vendors, taxi drivers and waiters, do foreign students interact with Chinese people? Not really, says Haiwang Zheng, an American student who participated in a study-abroad program last summer. "We lived in the foreign university students' dormitory, so our entire building was inhabited by foreigners, and we always went out as a group. So we didn't really immerse ourselves in local (life)," Zheng says.

Jasmine Kim, a Korean student who shared a similar experience, says, "I didn't get to know many 'real Chinese' during my Beijing stay."

"I think this was because my classmates naturally congregated outside of class," says Yujing Xue, who came to Beijing from the US with Global Exchange's language exchange program two summers ago.

Given that "going out" is a customary way for college kids to bond during their spare time, it is hardly surprising that, come weekends, students make their way en masse to bars and clubs.

"I've been down to Sanlitun and it's not that different from what I would experience on a night out back at my college," says one student from the US.

When foreign students are mostly to be found in classrooms, tourist sites and nightclubs, what kind of message does this send to local communities?

Is the rest of Beijing not worth knowing?

Finding a home in Beijing

Admittedly, it takes moxie to step out of one's comfort zone and into unfamiliar territory. But there are people who heed the challenge: they actively seek out encounters with the "more local" side of Beijing. One of these brave souls, Sarah Smith, made the decision to meet random Chi-



Numerous foreign students arrive in Beijing excited to experience China.

Photo provided by IES Beijing



Sarah Smith teaches English at the Dandelion School in Daxing District.

Photo by Janet Xiao

nese people, and wound up with a bona fide "cultural immersion" experience.

A third-year student at Duke University in the US, Smith came to Beijing alone in September 2009 to volunteer for a year at the Dandelion School, a middle school for migrant workers' children. Like many other exchange students, she "just sort of fell in love with China" and started studying Chinese.

Unlike many other foreign students, however, who regard Chinese culture as exotic, Smith said she feels "at home" in Beijing. "I know so many people and I feel accustomed to society," she says. "I understand how it works a little better – still learning, of course!" Nowadays, Sarah's routine involves a breakfast of *shaobing* and chinchits with the manager of a noodle shop near the Dandelion School.

Her strategy in getting acquainted with Beijing is getting to know the different people around her. She concedes that meeting other foreigners is important, since "sometimes you feel like you just need to speak English and really express yourself." But her social network in Beijing has expanded far beyond the expat community.

"I don't really go to the expat hangouts that much, because a lot of my friends are Chinese," she says. Her new friends here include a Chinese godmother, a boyfriend from Guangzhou, Chinese university students, migrant workers who live near her school and businesspeople who attend the school's charity events. "I tried to get a pic-

ture of every sector of society," she says.

"One of the first people I met in Beijing was a waitress, I didn't know anyone at the time and I needed someone to help me get a cell phone. So I was just like, 'Hi!' and we started talking." As Smith got to know her new friend better, she found that "[the waitress] came to work here, her son is still back in her hometown, and that's a scenario that's pretty common in Chinese society these days."

Snapshots of the city

Beijing is rife with locals who are willing to share their opinions and experiences. For foreign students, a key factor in experiencing more of the city lies in the willingness to start a conversation or make friends with a stranger.

Jasmine Kim, who participated in a study-abroad program last summer, recalls a memorable conversation she had in Beiluogu Xiang: "An old lady sat next to me when I was getting a foot massage. She's lived there for 50 years, so she is a living history of that neighborhood. She told me about how she is disappointed that the neighborhood has changed so rapidly, from pretty *hutong* houses into a commercialized, touristy place." People and conversations like these act as snapshots of contemporary society through which students can gain an insight into Beijing society and culture.

This summer, Haiwang Zheng finds himself back in Beijing on a community-service

project in Daxing District, digging deeper to understand the issues that face present-day Chinese society. "I wanted to see the dichotomy in society formed by the current gap in wealth distribution," he says. "These two weeks we haven't spent much time in the foreign, urbanized parts of Beijing. This [Daxing] is pretty much what most of China is like. The people we meet here are 'old Beijingers' and migrants, we don't see foreigners around here."

Popping the bubble

The path to discovering the more local side of Beijing is not fraught with perils, says Solaro Chan, international marketing manager of Integrated Education Service Global. "For individuals who really want to experience the local areas of Beijing ... it's not too difficult. Many of them find out about where to go from their friends." He says students are usually discouraged from venturing out by difficulties in communication and transportation.

The Institute for the International Education of Students (IES) attempts to address these difficulties and challenges its Beijing program participants to break free of the "student exchange bubble." The program director of IES Beijing, Brian Eyler, says, "We work with students a lot to help them adjust to meeting people. We do things to kind of force them to get out there and experience things in the first couple days, to know that it's not so scary." Part of their orientation program includes an "explore Beijing" activity, in which students must find their way to a specific location in town using public transportation on their own. Participants also live with host families and complete academic assignments among locals, such as in a public park, a chess club or a dance group.

"We have to let students know that they've got to work hard to make new relationships," Eyler says.

Smith's solution is simple: take risks. "Go out of your comfort zone to meet people that you would never expect to have anything in common with, or whom you never thought you could be friends with," she says. "If you try to reach out to people who might not be like you, you might be surprised at what you can find."

Graffiti art in Beijing and New York

By Chu Meng

The first Chinese graffiti artist came face to face with his US counterpart at C-space art gallery last Saturday for the opening ceremony of "From New York to Beijing: Graffiti Blogging in the Street," an exhibition of graffiti art by Zhang Dali and Blade.

The exhibition presents in cloth-copy the most popular works of Zhang and Blade, art created on the streets of downtown Beijing and New York that gives an insight into modernization trends in both cities.

"Graffiti represents the unique traits of its creators and a city's grassroots cultural elements," said Blade, 35, a black New Yorker. "Through exaggerated colors and images, it vividly reflects young people's desires under current social pressures."

Blade says it was the sights and sounds of city life that set him on a career in street art. "I grew up in a two-bedroom apartment in Parkside, a working-class housing project in the Bronx. As a kid, the playground outside my bedroom window was the center of the universe."

Overnight, names seemed to magically pop up on walls and light posts in his neighborhood, Blade said. Before long, he noticed graffiti also on the elevated trains passing by his Parkside playground. One day, he and his four best friends – who called themselves the "Crazy Five" – decided to immortalize their names on the city streets.

Their first midnight spray-painting adventure in a subway station is seared in Blade's memory. "I remember we walked quietly past a worker asleep in the token booth before tip-toeing up a flight of stairs to the Burke Avenue station. With cans of spray paint tucked in our waistbands, we walked to the end of the platform and hopped on the tracks. We only managed two pieces each that morning. It was too cold and the spray cans froze. But we were the first in our neighborhood to hit trains," he said.

Blade said he and his gang never got caught by the authorities as they did their art work under the cover of darkness, usually at 1 am.

Zhang Dali can relate to Blade's experience though he may live on the other side of the world. Zhang began creating



Blade stands beside his and Zhang's work on a wall at 798 Art District.

Photo provided by C-SPACE

graffiti in Beijing in the early 1990s, when he spray-painted thousands of bald heads on walls or buildings marked for demolition.

Lyn Stuart, a British journalist, recalls seeing Zhang's work all over the city. "At the time, if you had been in Beijing long enough to get in a taxi, then you had seen his work, profiles spray-painted on condemned buildings, freeway bridges and neglected walls."

She said people in Western cities would not have noticed them because the simple drawings would have been quickly sprayed over with new graffiti. Beijing, however, has almost no graffiti and Zhang's "heads" competed for space only with signs saying "no parking," "don't dump garbage here" and the ubiquitous character "chai," a warning of imminent demolition.

Many of Zhang's creations were intentionally placed next to "chai," a character that means "demolish." "The work is an attempt to engage in a dialogue with Beijing, a city where buildings come down faster than they did in wartime Berlin and London," he said.

Zhang discovered graffiti art and decided on it as a career when he moved to Italy in 1989. It was in Italy that he first spray-painted the stylized image of his own bald head that would become the centerpiece of his signature series. He returned to China four years later and made a home in the capital, where he conceived of his long-running project "Dialogue and Demolition."

"I wanted to draw attention to the rapidly changing face of the Chinese capital," Zhang said. He said he also aimed to call attention both to the changing character of Chinese society reflected in the destruction of old neighborhoods and communities, as well as to the increasing alienation among people, linked with rapid modernization and rampant materialism.

In New York, Paris and other Western cities, the space to create graffiti art is much freer and the subject matter more diverse, Zhang said, noting that environment gives rise to many brilliant artists.

Blade said Beijing has a fair amount of graffiti it can be proud of, though most can be found in underground garages and the 798 Art District.

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Brazilians in Beijing celebrate June Festival

By Liang Meilan

More than 350 Brazilians and Chinese people attended Festa Junina (June Festival) last Saturday evening, a traditional Brazilian festival celebrating the summer harvest. The event, held at the playground of Beijing City International School, featured Brazilian delicacies and a quiz on basic facts about China and Brazil.

Traditional Brazilian foods such as corn cakes, popcorn and *caipirinha*, a cocktail consisting of lime, sugar and rum, were served. Most of the food and drinks were made by members of *Brasileiros em Pequim*, or Brazilians in Beijing, the largest Brazilian organization in town and the organizer of the event.

"June Festival is similar to the Chinese people's Mid-Autumn Festival," said Ligia Liu, president of the organization. "As a country in the southern hemisphere, Brazil's harvest season occurs in the first half of June."

The quiz, designed by experts at the Brazil Culture Center of Peking University and a professor at Beijing Foreign Studies University, covered questions about Brazilian and Chinese culture and tradition.

"This is an effective way to promote cultural exchange," Liu said. "Many of the questions were not correctly answered, which shows both sides still have a lot to learn about each other," she said.

Guests were treated to a performance of *quadrilha*, a traditional Brazilian dance that features couples dancing around a bride and groom.

An increasing number of Brazilians are coming to Beijing, though their population of 1,000 is relatively small compared to other foreign communities in town.



Traditional Brazilian food and crafts were sold at the festival.



Brazilian families and their Chinese friends Photos by Paula Viotti



A child playing a fishing game

"Since China is on the rise, more and more Brazilians are coming here," said Vanessa Mastrocassio Silva, executive director of Brazilians in Beijing. "We want to promote the integration of Brazilians in Beijing and welcome families by offering guidance and practical information, as well as spread the knowledge of Brazilian culture by holding events such as festivals, seminars and lectures," she said.

Most Brazilians in China are in foreign trade, while others work for Brazilian-owned companies, Liu said. "There are also about 20 Brazilian overseas students studying traditional Chinese medicine. Kung fu is another popular major," she said.

Brazilians in Beijing, founded in 2003, has more than 300 member-families. It plans to soon include a classifieds section on its website, brapeq.com.cn, where members can publish information like upcoming activities and products to buy or sell.

Grape Wall of China wine challenge is back

By Annie Wei

The Grape Wall of China Challenge, which aims to identify the best imported wines under 100 yuan, is coming back for the second year on June 24 at Maison Boulud restaurant.

The judging process will be similar to last year's: two groups of Chinese judges – wine experts and average consumers – will blind-taste and rate 60 wines. The wines with the 10 highest scores will win. To maintain fairness and objectivity, no wine manufacturer or distributor will be invited to judge.

Jim Boyce, a wine blogger and co-organizer of the event, said he prefers to invite consumer judges who do not have much knowledge of or experience drinking foreign wine as the challenge's purpose is to discover what average Chinese consumers like, not



Li Demei (far left), a wine professor from Beijing University of Agriculture, was one of the judges at last year's challenge.

Photo by Jim Boyce

what foreigners or industry professionals like.

The event also hopes to promote within the local market the sale of wines from a wider range of grape varieties and nations of origin.

There is no fee to enter the contest, but distributors are required to provide two bottles of each wine entered, with a maximum of four wine types per distributor. They are also encouraged to provide the contest organizers with a list of stores where the wines are sold. A separate challenge is being organized for wines produced in China.

The event is co-organized by Nicolas Carre, a French wine consultant, and Zhao Fan, a chief representative at Pro-wine. Check out grapevallofchina.com for more information.

Event

Free eye checkup

Beijing Intech Eye Hospital is offering free eye checkups, which consists of a visual acuity check, computerized optometry and close analysis via a slit-lamp biomicroscope. Patients are encouraged to call to make an appointment.

The hospital caters to many foreign patients, and its VIP Clinic is staffed by a team of English-speaking doctors and bilingual nurses.

Where: Beijing Intech Eye Hospital, 5/F, Panjiayuan Dasha, 12 Panjiayuan Nan Li, Chaoyang District

When: Daily, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Cost: Free

Tel: 13426332528

Hutong bike tour

Cycle China, an organization that arranges cycling events in various cities around the country, is holding four-times-weekly bike tours of Beijing's hutong throughout June. Participants will get some exercise while discovering a way of life that is fast disappearing. An experienced guide will introduce the culture and customs of old Beijing.

Where: Cycle China, 12 Jingshan Dong Jie, Dongcheng District

When: Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday, until June 30, 2-5 pm

Cost: 150 yuan

Tel: 13911886524

Brazilian dance workshop

J-Ballet Studio is holding twice-weekly Brazilian dance workshops taught by Renata Secco, a Brazilian professional dancer and fitness instructor. She will teach samba fusion, which combines funk, reggae and Afro-Brazilian dances. Dancers of all levels are welcome.

Secco has been performing and teaching for more than 10 years in Brazil, the US and throughout Asia.

Where: J-Ballet Studio, 1/F Jinxiuyuan, Xingfucun Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Every Thursday and Sunday, 5:30 pm and 7 pm

Cost: 80 yuan

Tel: 15201233055

Departing from China with pets

Experts from the International Center for Veterinary Services (ICVS) will discuss the exit process and vaccination requirements to help those preparing to leave the country or moving to other Chinese cities with their pets. ICVS will also share advice on pet transport safety for pets and owners.

Where: International Center for Veterinary Services, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: June 12, 11 am – noon

Cost: Free

Tel: 8456 1939

(By Liang Meilan)

Enchanting a ca

By He Jianwei

If the human body is a miracle, then The King's Singers, a British a cappella choir, are its voice.

With one's eyes closed, it might seem like their performance brings together the talents of a 40-person choir and 40-person orchestra: in fact, the all-made ensemble has only six members.

Praised by *Gramophone Magazine* for possessing an "impeccably manicured vocal blend, enchanting the ear from first to last note," The King's Singers will perform for the third time in Beijing at the National Center for Performing Arts on June 26.

The King's Singers and the mag

With gold ties and black suits, The King's Singers celebrated their 40th anniversary in Beijing two years ago. On its last tour in China, the group sang Chinese folk songs, such as "Jasmine Flower" and Teresa Teng's "The Moon Represents My Heart."

This time, the ensemble will perform much-loved Celtic folksongs, French songs and love songs from the start of the 20th century.

Founded in 1968 by six choral scholars at King's College Cambridge, they quickly became a prominent musical force in the UK and specialized in "everything." From medieval music to masterpieces of the Renaissance, from romantic songs to folk, pop and jazz, their repertoire is all-encompassing.

The group has had 20 members since its founding in 1968 – six who are permanent singers and 14 who rotate as replacements. The current core of six includes two countertenors, two baritones, one tenor and one bass.

Stephen Connolly, bass, is the oldest member who joined 22 years ago. His musical journey started as a boy chorister in Leeds, Yorkshire, where he grew up.

At 18, he won a scholarship to study at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London and became a baritone at the school. Three years later he auditioned for The King's Singers in London.

To avoid a deluge of applications, the group does not advertise its vacant positions. When a member decides to leave, the remaining members draw up a list of singers to tap for the position.

"Prepared solo pieces are not required – the audition is all about making the same sounds as the people around you and displaying flexibility," Connolly said.

But passing the audition with the group will be a can

"It is important to wo

They have auditioned

way Americans or Germ

training and discipline p

maintaining the speed at

All current members

The second oldest mem

In 1970, when he was 7,

singing at the Winchester

"I can't help feeling th

soccer," Hurley said.

Membership in The K

churches, concert halls a

enormous variety of con

During their yearly to



Founded in 1968 by six choral scholars at King's College Cambridge, The King's Singers is one of the world's finest a cappella choirs.

Photos provided by the National Center for the Performing Arts

ppella

gic of voice

ion is no guarantee of membership: only after months of traveling and training didate be seriously considered.

rk out what a person is like socially – with seven months of the year on the road in all get on," he said.

non-British candidates, but every successful candidate has been British. "The us speak, for example, makes blending with five other Brits very difficult. The rovided by growing up as boy chorists have proven to be instrumental in which we have to work. Sight-reading has to be taken for granted," he said. in the ensemble began their careers as boy chorists.

mber is the countertenor David Hurley, who have joined the group 20 years ago. he settled on a life of song. His parents asked him to choose between either soccer or Cathedral Choir, and he chose the latter.

hat if my choice had been different, I would not be reflecting on a career in

ing's Singers means being an itinerant musician. They sing everywhere: in nd outside. "I enjoyed my life as an itinerant musician, traveling the world to a cert venues," he said.

urs of at least 120 concerts they rehearse two hours before every performance to

make sure the evening's repertoire is ready.

During rehearsal they do not sing a whole piece. They work on a small section of a piece as a means of interpreting the whole.

"It means that we can solve many issues specific to a piece – tone, color, blending and tuning, for example. Rehearsing in this way means that once a piece enters the repertoire it stays in an ever-ready state so it can be performed at subsequent concerts with little or no rehearsal," Hurley said.

The group has a new member present for this year's trip to China: Timothy Wayne-Wright, a countertenor.

When previous member Robin Tyson decided to leave the group in 2008, Wayne-Wright received an audition call. He was a lay clerk at St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle in 2008.

Wayne-Wright first heard The King's Singers as a boy chorister at Cathedral Chelmsford. "I was amazed to see how six singers on the stage could entertain hundreds of people and without any accompaniment," he said.

Besides performances, the group has also released over 150 recordings. Their recent studio album *Simple Gifts* was awarded a Grammy in 2009. On this tour, they will sing the songs from their latest album *Swimming Over London*.

Although they have announced a list of English and French songs for the upcoming concert, they have also prepared several Chinese songs for the encore. Their names remain a secret.



From medieval music to masterpieces of the Renaissance, from romantic songs to folk, pop and jazz, the repertoire of The King's Singers is all-encompassing.

Membership in The King's Singers means being an itinerant musician. They sing everywhere: in churches, concert halls and outside.

During rehearsal they do not sing a whole piece. They work on a small section of a piece as a means of interpreting the whole.

The King's Singers Concert

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: June 26, 7:30 pm

Admission: 100-500 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Extraordinary tale of sex, money and Facebook

By Charles Zhu

You probably know Facebook, the most popular social networking website, and its founder Mark Zuckerberg. However, you may not know the tales of sex, money, genius and friendship involved in its founding.

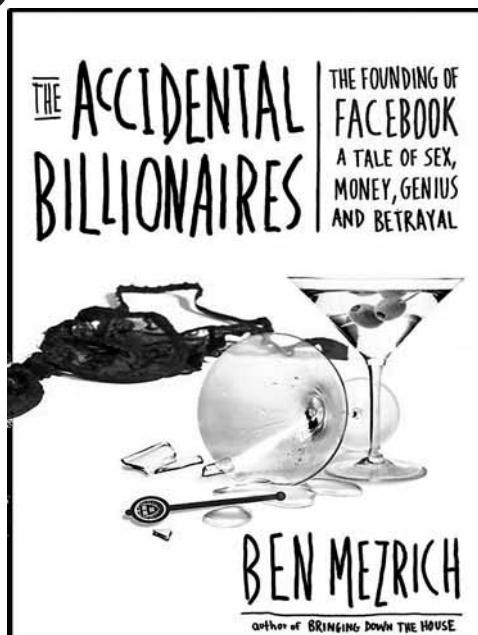
Ben Mezrich, a Boston-based author, offers readers *The Accidental Billionaires*, a fascinating book about a story of backstabbing, wild sex, hard drinking and feasting on roasted koala on a yacht owned by a Silicon Valley millionaire.

Mezrich, the author who chronicled the deeds of Las Vegas gamblers, high-powered financiers and Japanese gangsters, sets a raunchy tone for the book that features an overturned cocktail glass and a discarded bra next to the message: "A tale of sex, money, genius and betrayal."

The book tells the story of Facebook's founding by Harvard student Mark Zuckerberg and his friends. It chronicles the site's rise from a private project initiated at a Harvard dorm room and aimed at judging the attractiveness of his fellow students to a way for classmates to keep in touch, and then eventually to a global phenomenon valued at billions of dollars.

Zuckerberg, who dropped out of college six months after starting the site, took most of his ideas from existing social networks such as Friendster and MySpace.

But Facebook unquestionably contains traces of Harvard. It started at the top of the social hierarchy with its audience, at first, limited to Harvard. Zuckerberg's website would first retain the exclusivity of its namesake through the require-



The Accidental Billionaires
By Ben Mezrich, 272pp, Anchor, \$15.95

ment: To "friend" someone, you needed to have a Harvard email address. This helped initiate interaction among the scholastic audience on campus.

A month after Zuckerberg launched the site, he expanded to Princeton and Stanford. It was at the start a very exclusive club of friends. He was not interested in social distinction and "position taking," but in sex. The page offered choices for interest in either men, women or both and asked whether one was looking for friendship, a relationship, dating or "Random Play."

"No one has really succeeded

in making Silicon Valley sexy. But this book might," commented Caroline McCarthy, a journalist for the technology website CNET. The book evolves amidst models, hard-partying champagne bashes and the dark deeds of the rich and powerful.

Critics deem it "a captivating story of betrayal, vast amounts of cash and two friends who revolutionized the way humans connect to one another – only to have an enormous falling out and never speak again."

The expose is set to become a major movie. Aaron Sorkin, the man behind the acclaimed

TV series *The West Wing*, is writing the script and David Fincher, who directed *Fight Club* and *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, is being considered to direct it. Canadian actor Michael Cera is being picked to play Zuckerberg.

Facebook has declared that it does not appreciate Mezrich's treatment of its founding and has strong doubts about its validity.

"Ben Mezrich clearly aspires to be the Jackie Collins or Danielle Steele of Silicon Valley," a Facebook spokesman said. "In fact his own publisher put it best: 'The book isn't reportage. It's big juicy fun.' We particularly agree with the first part of that, and think any reader will concur."

The book has stirred up excitement not only because of its portrayals of high prank playing among Harvard students but also because the book is increasingly criticized as being inaccurate. Mezrich invented dialogue and scenes that did not happen while publishing non-fiction.

"Inventing characters is against the ideal of non-fiction," said James Hirsen, a media law expert at Biola University, southern California. "The key word being 'inventing' ... there has been a blurring of non-fiction and fantasy."

"Mezrich's definition of non-fiction is perhaps quite different from what the average reader's definition of non-fiction is," said Luke O'Brien, a journalist who has written several pieces critical of Mezrich's methodology.

"Cultural perceptions about what is fact and what is fiction are a lot looser than they used to be," said Hirsen. That may be true, but blurring the line can still be a risky game for publishers to play.

Timezone 8 book listing

Timezone 8 is a Hong Kong-based publisher, distributor and retailer of books on contemporary art, architecture, photography and design. This week, it recommends three new titles to *Beijing Today* readers.



Breaking Forecast

By Guo Xiaoyan and Jerome Sans, 226pp, Timezone 8, \$35

The book offers a look at the future of contemporary art in China through the lens of eight artists, who collectively embody the vitality of China's new generation: Cao Fei, Chu Yun, Liu Wei, Qiu Zhijie, Sun Yuan, Peng Yu, Yang Fudong and Zheng Guogu.

Who is Architecture?

The 2009
Domus China
Interviews
by Brendan McGerrick

Who is Architecture: The 2009 Domus China Interviews

Edited by Brendan McGerrick, 144pp, Timezone 8 and Domus China, \$28

Architecture is a collaborative art calling on the efforts of engineers, developers, plumbers and electricians. The production process must balance individual empowerment and general management to allow for meaningful dialogue between diverse professionals. The book explores these interactions through 10 interviews with professionals who contribute to architecture in various ways.



Wang Yin

By Carol Yinghua Lu, 136pp, Timezone 8, \$40

This publication surveys the work of Chinese artist Wang Yin, born in 1964, during the period between 2003 and 2009. It endeavors to place Wang's creations in the historical context of 20th-century Chinese painting, as well as broader shifts in modern culture. It also demonstrates the artist's active engagement with the Western artistic canon from Vincent van Gogh and Georges Seurat to Edward Hopper and Andrew Wyeth.

(By He Jianwei)

Book finds freedom from mental troubles

By He Jianwei

Books dealing with physical and mental health usually top the list of China's bestselling non-fiction. But a new picture book of mental disorders is a curious break from the norm.

How Far Will Become Abnormal: Picture Book of Abnormal Psychology deals with depression, anxiety neurosis, obsessive-compulsive disorder, hysteria, phobia, psychosexual disorder and personality disorder.

The book is written for the beginner. Each disorder becomes a person in the book and each person's characteristics represent each symptom. Readers can conduct a self-examination using each person's characteristics. The author also gives tips on how to cope with symptoms and utilize diet therapy.

"As a clinical psychologist, I'm moved that the author put such a humorous spin on suffering. If readers understand

the author's intent, then this book could be as useful as psychotherapy," Ji Xuesong, a psychologist at the sixth Hospital of Peking University, wrote in the preface.

At the end of last month, Ji spoke on abnormal psychology at One Way Street Bookstore. Readers including college students and the middle-aged crowded on the second floor.

In Ji's eyes, the book is not an academic book, but it tells readers that "abnormal" is just another way of living and responding to the pressures of urban life. The book encourages readers to approach mental troubles and learn how to adjust their emotions.

"Unlike black and white, abnormal is not the opposite of normal. The progression from normal to abnormal has a sequence," Ji said. "People who have severe mental illness will harm others but are not aware of their disease, like schizo-

phrenics. But people who are not very ill usually know well what their problem is. Obsessive-compulsive patients are one example."

Ji said readers can ask three questions to examine their mental state. The first is whether they enjoy being themselves. "Normal" people are aware of their advantages and disadvantages and they accept themselves whereas people who attempt suicide usually hate themselves.

Second is whether they enjoy life, especially their friends and human relations. And the last is whether they enjoy their job, because a job can help people fulfill their social needs.

"The principal aim of psychotherapy is not to transport one to an impossible state of happiness, but to help the client acquire steadfastness and patience in the face of suffering," Ji said, quoting Swiss psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung.



How Far Will You Become Abnormal: Picture Book of Abnormal Psychology
By Zhao Mintong, 144pp, Wuhan University Press, 24.80 yuan

Voices behind the screen

Fandubbing goes mainstream

By Wang Yu

Internet fansubbing groups have long been responsible for introducing many foreign TV series to Chinese viewers.

But the latest buzz is surrounding fandubbers, people who lend their vocal talents to creating versions of their favorite shows with Chinese audio. Some of the dubbers are professional voice actors, but many more are those who dream of making it big in the world of voice.

While fan-made dubs have been around almost as long as fansubs, it was not until four college students decided to redub one of Japan's more popular comedies with a script tailored to China that the hobby went mainstream.



Most viewed on video sites

The past three weeks, the Japanese animated comedy *Gag Manga Biyori* has been one of China's most popular shows according to Youku and Tudou rankings.

Unlike most Japanese series available on streaming media websites, its first five episodes are available in Chinese with voices provided by the fandub group called CuCn201.

The show, which is packed with hard-to-translate Japanese humor, began as a comic serialized in the now defunct *Monthly Shonen Jump* magazine. Those stories

were first animated in 2005 as a series of 5-minute shorts. In Internet fan circles, *Gag* is famous for its hyperactive, random and nonsensical style.

But the series has always been limited to the hardcore anime fan niche – until CuCn201 stepped up to create a dub.

CuCn201's fandubs tend to be popular because the group rewrites its scripts to suit a Chinese audience. Popular figures and events are often sprinkled liberally through out the show.

That's not to say it mutilates the story. Far from it. The basic plot is unchanged, but there is a deliberate effort to balance Japanese comedy and Chinese language. Many new words coined in CuCn201's dubs have already evolved into online catchphrases.

From Douban to its Baidu paste bar, fans of CuCn201 gathered each week as they wait for a new release.

"Most people born in the 1980s have grown up with Japanese humor. But the people at CuCn201 have taken things a step further to localize these jokes so even middle-aged viewers can understand them," says Tony Lee, a pop culture editor.

Born in the dorm

"CuCn201" is a portmanteau taken from Communication University of China Nanjing and the dorm room number its four members shared during school. The four were broadcasting majors, and on the phone they sound like talk show hosts.

The fandub idea was born when Luo Hongming and Wang Song watched "End of the World," an episode of *Gag Manga Biyori* dubbed by 729, one of the country's biggest fandub groups.

Dissatisfied, the roommates decided to make their own dub.

"We knew nothing about the dub scene before we saw that episode. 729 was a semi-professional group – they had big names like Li Lu Jianyi whose voice was in *Roman Holiday* and Jian Guangtao who voiced *Transformers*. We just thought why not give it a shot?" says Song Ming, a member of CuCn201.

It was also a way to stay connected to college life. The four graduate this month and wanted a chance to record their voices together.

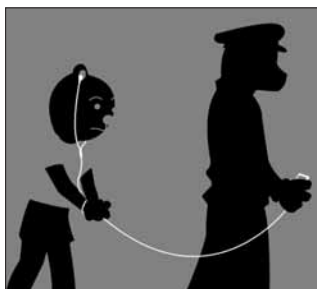
The crew read the translation written by the original fansubbers. It took them two hours to dub the first episode – including time spent rewriting and recording – using a computer, a firewire sound card and a cheap microphone.

The episode was a funny story was adapted from *Journey to the West*. The sound quality was good enough for an online broadcast, and the idioms and phrases that would soon go viral were the real "dorm language" of room 201.

"It interesting to see everyone using all these phrases we created during the past four years," Song says. There is no female voice in the videos because girls are not allowed in the male dormitory.

The say they pick the episodes that most inspire them. The hardest part is rewriting the script to avoid recycling jokes, they said.

"Each new episode gets harder to make. But that does ensure the quality of our work – each show is guaranteed to make you laugh a new way," Song says.



Reaching out of the scene

The original dubbers Lu Jiangyi and Jiang Guangtao watched CuCn201's work and said they were professional and talented.

Song says, "The videos are funny but we take each step very seriously. Their praise makes me proud of myself."

729 is a much bigger group formed by actors and recording engineers between the ages of 20 and 50. It was organized by Cheng Han, a long time anime fan, five years ago. So far the group has dubbed and released 12 series plays; it is most famous for its Chinese dub of *Onmyoji*.

Similar fandubs groups have popped up the last few years, but CuCn201's mainstream success has helped catapult the hobby into mass view.

But CuCn201 may not be around much longer.

"After all, this started as a touchstone project. We are all leaving college and heading for different cities to start our careers, so it is hard to promise we'll continue. I know fans are eager for new videos and we will do what we can before we separate," Song says.

Song has long dreamed of being a dub actor. He and his roommates practiced their skills dubbing many movies in their college studio.

He is still hoping to break into the dub scene.

But the road to becoming a voice talent is a tough one. Most professional voice actors are recruited from an acting program because studios think broadcasting students' voices are too formal for most movie roles.

"To me, CuCn201 is proof that we have what it takes to be voice actors," Song says.

There has been a growing need for new voice talent the last 30 years as many masters of the Chinese movie scene have aged and passed away.

But at the same time, the scene has contracted because viewers today are comfortable with subtitles. Beijing is home to about 100 voice actors, most of whom fill in for Hong Kong stars who cannot speak standard Chinese.

Though there are training lessons for beginners, where to go after that remains a mystery.

"I may not know how to start, but I will definitely keep recording on my own," Song says.



Exciting new shops at JoyCity Chaoyang

By Annie Wei

One of Xidan's most popular malls is now also on Chaoyang North Road. JoyCity opened its second branch in town two weeks ago, aiming to be the new shopping and entertainment hub on the east side.

Though the Chaoyang mall contains largely the same shops and restaurants as those in its Xidan location, we found some new stores that make it worth a trip to East Fourth Ring.

Banila Co

Chinese tourists to South Korea are impressed by the local women's smooth and clear complexions, often attributed to nutritious food, a cleaner environment and quality cosmetics.

Among the quality yet affordable South Korean makeup brands is Banila Co; its blonde models and packaging and logo in pink, black, blue and purple are reminiscent of the US's Benefit.

Banila Co's shop at JoyCity Chaoyang is its first in Beijing, and not surprisingly, is already being swarmed by young women wanting free makeovers.

Its bestseller is the prime primer (220 yuan) liquid foundation. It feels like Armani's fluid master primer, but is only half the price. It's ideal for creating the appearance of smoother skin by covering pores and balancing facial oil.

An alternative is the mineral surprise makeup essence (230 yuan). It's a lightweight ivory cream with a translucent finish and has a light flowery scent, akin to Elizabeth Arden's Sun-flowers. Besides serving as a primer, it also works as a face brightener, giving the nose and cheeks a subtle glow.

We like Banila Co's BB Cream, with SPF 27/PA+++ (280 yuan), known for creating the "nude makeup look." It was formulated especially to cover pores or blemishes on Asian skin, but it sadly does not provide oil control. In summer, it's wise to use it with an oil-control cream to prevent the face's T-zone from becoming too oily.

Banila Co's makeup artist recommends first putting on sunscreen and the prime primer before applying the BB cream. *Beijing Today* also recommends its spring and summer eyeliner: pink and green in one pencil (120 yuan). They are the "in" colors for the season, giving the eyes a subtle glamorous look.

The store also offers care for makeup accessories, like the makeup brush wash (100 yuan), a brush cleaner rarely sold at other cosmetic shops in town. Pour the wash into a bowl, swish your makeup brushes in the liquid then flush them with water. In summer, it's especially important to keep makeup tools clean.

Banila Co

Where: 4F-38, JoyCity Chaoyang, 101 Chaoyang Bei Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 10 am - 8 pm
Tel: 8552 3795



BB cream, 280 yuan



Eye liner, 120 yuan



Makeup brush wash, 100 yuan



Prime primer, 220 yuan
Photos provided by Banila Co

Designer items from around the world

The mall has many stores selling functional designer products, like home decor, kitchenware and stationery, but the widest selection of goods undoubtedly belongs to +86.

Established last November, +86 says it is the first international-design concept store in town with products from 50 international brands. It offers dinnerware, lighting fixtures, stationery, fashion accessories and hundreds of cute gift ideas.

As designer pieces, expect +86's merchandise to be expensive. For the financially strapped, the good news is there are some items with similar designs available on taobao.

Artecnic Lamp designed by Tord Boontje, 598 yuan

This midsummer light has won many awards since Tord, a Dutch designer, created it in 2004. It is constructed from two layers of Tyvek, a super resistant paper draped over a heat-blocking cone, and creates a visual effect of cascading layers of dazzling forest creatures and foliage.



Wine rack from Rosendahl, 1,380 yuan

This wall-mounted rack embodies functionality, convenience and style. It was designed so that the wine bottles and their labels form an integral part of the piece, unlike traditional wine racks in which only the necks of the bottles are visible. Seeing the labels also makes it easier to know when it's time to reorder your favorite brands.

The wine tube is made from brushed anodized aluminum tube with a series of cutouts that allow the bottles to be suspended perpendicular to the wine tube. It is easy to mount on the wall, and can be disassembled so that moving homes becomes a bit easier.



Bottle stoppers from Artecnic, 218 yuan

These bottle stoppers, made of cast resin, come in the shape of flowers like aemilia, lily, magnolia and orchid. Grab one to add jazz to that unfinished bottle of wine, olive oil or water.

Photos provided by +86 Design Store

Tea ware for daddies, 720 to 2,880 yuan

Chinese men tend to drink less beer and more tea as they get older. For Father's Day tomorrow, why not get the main man of the family a new set of tea pot and cups? Tonfish offers designs in ceramic and wood.



Environmentally-friendly chopsticks, 98 yuan

These are made of recycled material, and come in colorful designs perfect for take away. +86 will denote 1 yuan to an environmental NGO for each pair of chopsticks sold.



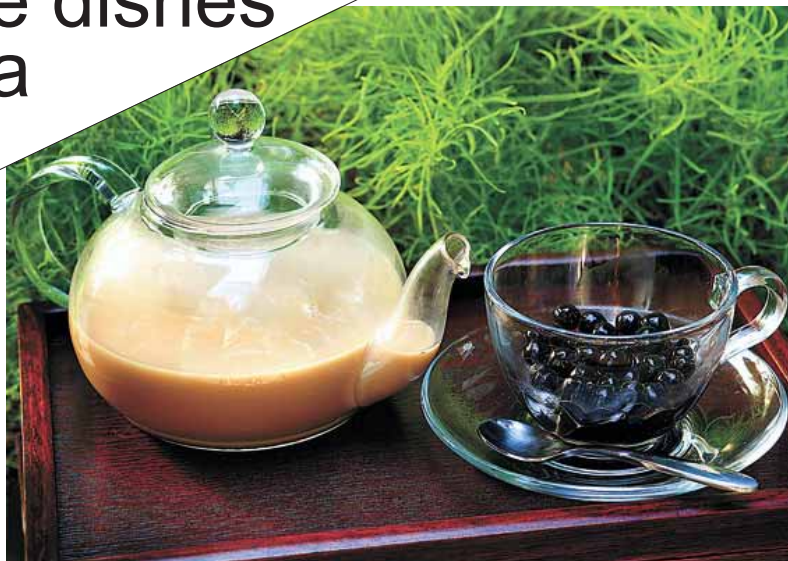
+86 Design Store
Where: B1-13, JoyCity,
101 Chaoyang Bei Lu,
Chaoyang District
Open: 10 am - 8 pm
Tel: 8552 8386
Web: 86designstore.com

Taiwanese rice dishes and oolong tea

New



Seafood hot pot, 28 yuan



Taiwan milk tea, 14 yuan

By Annie Wei

The number of Taiwanese restaurants in town has kept up with Beijing's growing Taiwanese population. On the inexpensive end of the spectrum is Mellow Tea, known for sumptuous meals and refreshing tea drinks.

Office workers love its rice meals, which come in 10 varieties. Our favorite is stewed pork with rice (22 yuan), a classic Taiwanese dish of pork chunks that are first browned then stewed in a fragrant, soy-based sauce until tender.

Stewed beef and potato with red wine sauce and rice (25 yuan) is cooked in non-alcoholic "red wine" and tastes really creamy. Steamed chicken drumstick with soy sauce and rice (25 yuan) is chicken meat than is marinated and then steamed.

Another popular item is the seafood hot pot (28 yuan), which offers broth in both spicy and non-spicy varieties, and is served with seasonal vegetables. It is available as a set meal, with three cold dishes free. Add 8 yuan to any set meal and get any drink worth 10 yuan.

For those who want a big serving of vegetables, we recommend the chef's salad, sprinkled with tuna, cheese, bacon, nuts and kuroil sauce. It is 22 yuan for a small dish and 30 yuan for a big one.

And what's a Taiwanese restaurant without the island's famed snacks? Try the fried cala-

mari ball (26 yuan), minced calamari mixed with ground pork and egg white, and deep-fried until they're crisp and golden.

There's also the fried sweet potato (20 yuan), French fries with cheese and spicy pork sauce (28 yuan) and mini teppanyaki (28 or 29 yuan) of either chicken, beef or tofu with mushrooms.

In the tea department, Taiwan is known for its oolong, and Mellow Tea has a dozen oolong beverages with flavors like apple and orange. We

recommend its passion fruit oolong tea (12 or 14 yuan), which is a refreshing summer drink. The restaurant has more than 30 kinds of tea-based beverages like milk teas and black teas.

Add 2 yuan to any drink to top it up with pudding, coffee jelly, grass jelly or sweetened sago. All tea drinks are made from fresh tea leaves. Apart from a soothing cup of tea, our favorites for

afternoon refreshment are black tea jelly (12 yuan), cream burlee (15 yuan), jasmine green tea jelly (12 yuan), handmade brown sugar biscuit with ice cream (16 yuan) and handmade matcha biscuits with ice cream (16 yuan).

Mellow Tea has five branches in town: three in various SOHO buildings, one in Wangjing and the latest in Baiziwan. Each store offers free delivery for orders within 2 kilometers of it.

Mellow Tea

Where: Room 36, Building 2, 32 Baiziwan Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 11:30 am - 8 pm
Tel: 5821 1391



Steamed chicken with soy sauce and rice, 25 yuan



Stewed streaky port with rice, 22 yuan
Photos provided by Mellow Tea

Sichuan food in a cozy courtyard

By Annie Wei

Tucked in a hutong near Nan Luoguxiang but away from the crowds is Dezhe, a small Sichuan restaurant owned by Guangdong TV host and model Li Ai and her friends. Besides being associated with a celebrity, the courtyard restaurant is also making a name for itself with its good food.

Dezhuo consists of two main dining rooms and a courtyard. The courtyard can seat only eight to 10 people, so call early to reserve the section.

The menu selection, which is quite small, focuses on spicy food. As appetizer, we recommend boboji (18 yuan), 18 skewers of various meat and vegetables like chicken meat,

chicken gizzard, mushroom, broccoli and bamboo shoots. It is topped with a spicy sauce of green and red peppers. Additional skewers are 0.50 yuan for the vegetables and 1 yuan for meat.

You can also start with the strawberry-flavored Chinese yam (18 yuan), a light and refreshing option, or something hotter like rabbit meat with chili sauce (36 yuan).

For the main course, try Wujiang catfish in chili sauce (58 yuan for every 500 grams), chicken gizzard with pickled peppers (48 yuan), anise dumpling duck soup (48 yuan), stir-fried beef slices (38 yuan), beef with scallion (38 yuan) or Sichuan noodle (6 yuan).

Diners who prefer less spicy dishes can opt for the

tomato fish soup or boiled fish with pickled cabbage and chilies, both 48 yuan for a small order and 58 yuan for a big one. Also try the house special: braised pot roast corner bean (42 yuan), preserved Sichuan ham served with beans.

The spicy dishes go well with Dezhuo's iced tea (28 yuan per pot), which is made from smoked plum, hawthorn fruit, wolfberry and mint.

Dezhe

Where: 1 Beijixiang Hutong, Jiadaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
Open: 11 am - 10 pm
Tel: 6407 8615



House special braised pot roast corner bean, 42 yuan



Iced tea, 28 yuan

Photos by Ding Chunhan



Boboji, 18 yuan



Boiled fish with pickled cabbage and chilies, 48 yuan

New

Supperclub Amsterdam talents for World Cup opening night



By Chu Meng

Four of the most popular acts in Amsterdam's club scene are expected to boost the excitement in town this evening, the opening night of the FIFA World Cup. DJ Jaziah, DJ Jama, saxophonist Saxy Mr. S. and drummer Kazzikaz, favorites at Supperclub Amsterdam, will heat up ROOMbeijing's dance floor with a blend of electronica and live music.

"It needs quite a lot of preparation, presenting something special for the World Cup opening night, also a big night for Beijing young-

sters ... In order to give a great surprise on our first Beijing show, there has been a lot of rehearsal," DJ Jaziah said.

To get clubbers warmed up and to set the tone for the evening, Supperclub Amsterdam resident DJ Jama will play a blend of house vocals spiced with Ibiza grooves. As midnight nears, the boys will mix Amsterdam electronic house with Latin beats, house classics and a dash of saxophone by Saxy Mr. S.

"A little later, when the party really starts," said DJ Jama,

"we'll rock it off with a mix of famous house tracks, energizing them with congas and bongos. At 3 o'clock, the people will hit the roof when the four of us present a harmonic battle between live music and DJs. At the last hour, we'll build on and off with a mix of cracking house anthems." The revelry will continue the following night.

Supperclub Amsterdam, established in 1993, transformed Amsterdam's nightlife by injecting more freedom and creativity to dining and clubbing. During the

past decade it has positioned itself as the "apex of freedom" in the city's club scene by featuring unconventional musicians and performers.

ROOMbeijing Intimate Sessions with Supperclub Amsterdam

Where: ROOMbeijing Club, Rooms 301-302, 3/F, Beijing Yintai Center, 2 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: June 11-12, 7 pm - 4 am

Admission: 300 yuan
Tel: 8517 2033

Upcoming

Nightlife

Just Two of Us

At 17 is a Hong Kong-based female duo who sings Cantonese pop and folk.
Where: Star Live, 3/F Tango, 79 Heping Xi Jie, Dongcheng District
When: June 14, 8 pm
Admission: 150 yuan advance purchase, 180 yuan at the door
Tel: 6402 5080

Stage in July

Concert

Musica Alta Ripa - German Baroque Music Ensemble

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 18 Zhaodengyu Lu, Xicheng District

When: July 2, 7:30 pm
Admission: 30-380 yuan
Tel: 6417 7845

Yuja Wang and the China

NCPA Concert Hall Orchestra

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts (NCPA), 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: July 3, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-480 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

China National Symphony Orchestra

Where: Peking University Hall, 5 Yiheyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: July 11, 7 pm
Admission: 40 and 50 yuan

Tel: 6275 8452

Garrick Ohlsson Piano Recital

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: July 11, 7:30 pm
Admission: 100-400 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Dance

Our Sky

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: July 25-26, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-400 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Drama

Can Three Make It - Part I

Where: 46 Theater, 46 Fangjia Hutong, Dongcheng District

When: July 2-4, 7:30 pm
Admission: 50-280 yuan
Tel: 6417 0058

The Poison

Where: Multi-Purpose Theater of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: July 14-18, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-320 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Opera

Sun Snow

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: July 1-3, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-480 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

(By He Jianwei)

5 Friday, June 11

Exhibition Pink Utopia - Jiang Jie Solo Exhibition

Jie makes black tiles encased in pink silk bags, which line the floor of a house and look like a pink silk carpet.

Where: Beyond Art Space, 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until July 8, daily except Monday, 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5978 9561

Movie



Vincere (Victory, 2009)

This is the tragic story of Ida Dalsar, who became

a mistress of Italy's fascist leader Benito Mussolini. She bore Mussolini a son before the start of World War I, but lost touch with him during the war. She found him in a hospital a few years later, and also discovered he had a wife and daughter. Dalsar claimed to have been married to Mussolini, but no evidence to support this has ever been found.

Where: Italian Cultural Institute, 2 Dong Er Jie, Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6532 2187

Nightlife

Ma Valise

This French band plays a mix of traditional folk songs, rock and world music, including Eastern European folk, gypsy beats and hip-hop.

Where: Mako Livehouse, 36 Guangqu Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 8 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5205 1112

6 Saturday, June 12

Exhibition Reverse - Cheng Yuyang Solo Exhibition

Cheng's Fragmented Nostalgia series depicts the artist's inner world through inverted black and white images.

Where: MR Gallery, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until July 5, daily except Monday, 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5978 9058

Movie



Boy (2010)

A film about a dreamy 11-year-old boy who loves Michael Jackson. He lives on a

farm with his father Alamein and a younger brother who thinks he has magic powers. The boy imagines his father as a deep-sea diver, a war hero and a close relative of Michael Jackson. But in reality, Alamein is an inept, wannabe gangster who has been in jail for robbery.

Where: Broadway Cinematheque, 2/F Building 4, North section of Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), 1 Xiangheyuan Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 1:15 pm, 7:40 pm

Admission: 40 yuan, 30 yuan for students

Tel: 8438 8258 ext. 8008

Nightlife

Zenzile

This French band plays post punk, dub, folk, soft rock, soul and jazz.

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 70 yuan advance purchase, 100 yuan at the door

Tel: 6404 2711

7 Sunday, June 13

Exhibition Aloof From the Struggle, Aside From the Hubbub

Wang Chuan has explored abstract expressionism and pop art for 30 years, and alternates between realistic oil images and abstract inks.

Where: PIFO New Art Gallery, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until June 30, daily except Monday, 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5978 9562

Nightlife

Ember Swift

The Canada-born Swift reflects on her experiences in the East after spending a year in Beijing.

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9:30 pm

Admission: 30 yuan advance purchase, 40 yuan at the door

Tel: 6401 4611

Movie

Les Jeux de l'amour (The Games of Love, 1960)

Victor and Suzanne are a couple at odds about commitment in this light, fast-paced comedy-drama. Suzanne wants more reassurance from Victor about the future of their rela-

tionship, but the painter finds it difficult to understand his girlfriend's worries. When a friend proposes to Suzanne, Victor suddenly sees her point of view.

Where: French Cultural Center, 1/F, Guangcai International Mansion, 18 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6553 2627

Pretty nails a source of poor health?

By Han Manman

Now that summer has returned, women are once again heeding the call of the nail salon.

Bright red nail polish is sophisticated and sexy. Hot pink is chic. A French manicure looks professional and clean. But doctors warn that the pursuit of beautiful nails can be risky.

Risks at nail salons

Going to the nail salon has been Jessie Wang's weekly ritual since summer began. She always happily waits for over an hour to have her finger and toe nails painted the color of pink cotton candy and accented with tiny rhinestones. The clean look of freshly manicured nails has brought her a lot of attention — and trouble.

Recently, Jessie found one of her toenails turned white and started to disintegrate. After seeking help from the doctor, she learned she had developed a fungal infection at the nail salon.

Gao Yanqing, a dermatologist at Beijing You'an Hospital, said many patients have been coming in with infections, allergic reactions and lost nails due to the chemicals used by nail stylists, whose trade flies under the radar of regulation.

"The patients complain that their nails burn, turn brown, green or white, sometimes disintegrate. But it never occurs to them that their problems started with a manicure or pedicure at a nail salon," Gao said.

A lack of hygienic practices makes nail salons a breeding ground for fungal and bacterial infections, she said.

"Many salons are using the same instruments for each person — it's so dangerous," Gao said.

Fungal infections caused by *tinea* and *candida albicans* bacteria are the most typical health problems resulting from unhygienic nail treatments. While the chance of contracting hepatitis C or HIV at a nail salon is slim, it is still a "definite possibility," Gao said.

She said foot soaking spreads bacterial infections such as *staphylococcus* when salons fail to sanitize their tools between customers.

"If the salon's tools are picked up off the floor, look dirty, or bear dust and other residue, or if the towels aren't clean, then the customer should walk out," she said.

Tips for your next trip

There are a few things you can do to make sure your next salon trip is a safe one.

1. Don't get your cuticles trimmed: Most beauticians end a manicure with a trimming of your fingernail cuticles. This is harmful to your nails because it is the cuticles, that protect your nails from germs and bacteria. By getting them removed, you are making your nails more prone to infections. Next time you go to the salon, ask your beautician to push the cuticles back rather than remove them.

2. Salon visits should never be painful: Thoroughly research the treatments you are getting. The use of razors and other sharp instruments will make you more vulnerable to infection. If you experience any pain or stinging while getting a manicure or pedicure, you should immediately ask the beautician to stop.

3. Bring your own tools to the salon: It's safer to purchase your own nail tools, both steel instruments — which you should clean with hydrogen peroxide — and non-metal tools. Files, buffers, nail brushes and orange sticks are made of porous materials, which easily harbor bacteria. Since wood products can't be sterilized, these tools should be used only once.

4. Beware these tools at your salon: Don't allow your manicurist to use credo blades, razors, callus graters and cuticle cutters. These cut skin allowing bacteria to enter.

5. Look around for warning signs: Glance around the salon. If there is dust, debris or clippings on the floor or caught in corners, that's a warning sign that cleanliness is not of utmost importance. Also look for the salon's license, which should be posted on the wall along with its technicians' licenses.

6. Use plastic liners or hefty bags in footbaths: simply cleaning footbaths after every use is not safe enough. Debris caught in the mesh catch under the drain can be a health hazard. Salons should use products like plastic liners in their footbaths. Footbaths should be washed with hot, soapy water and sprayed with a disinfectant after each use.

7. Check into proper sterilization techniques: Ask the beautician to use only sterilized products in order to ensure care and caution. If possible, ask your beautician if she can get you a separate set of instruments when you call up to schedule an appointment. This will ensure peace of mind and good health.



Ailments linked to nail salons

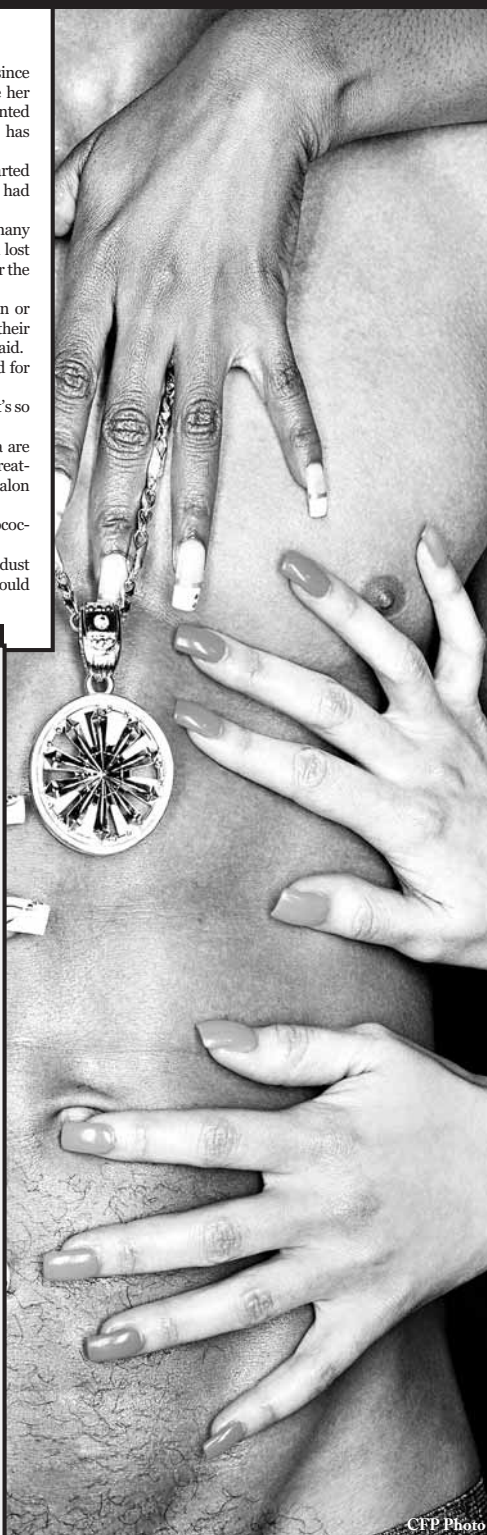
1. Allergic reaction: Allergies to the chemicals used in nail products can develop just like ordinary skin allergies. These reactions may include inflammation, redness, itching and burning. These are symptoms of a contact allergy. Although they may be limited to the area around and underneath the nail, they can also occur around the face and neck.

2. Fungus: With so many customers sharing the same equipment, improper sanitation at nail salons can easily spread *tinea capitis* and ringworm. These infections can circulate when instruments and tools are not cleaned between clients or aren't handled in a hygienic manner.

3. Boils and rashes: There is much controversy surrounding pedicure baths at nail salons, as some pedicurists can often be lax about cleaning the baths. Residues can easily pass boils and rashes on to other clients.

4. Bacterial Infections: Many pedicures include shaving as part of their beauty treatment, but bacteria easily enter the skin through these small cuts. Bacterial infections also result from contaminated footbaths. Poorly cleaned tubs allow biofilm such as oils, skin, hair and lotions to build up. This is a fertile breeding ground for mycobacteria.

5. Breast Cancer: Recently, researchers have begun examining a link between nail salons and breast cancer. Formaldehyde resins, found in nail polish and hardeners, are listed by the US-based Environmental Protection Agency as a probable carcinogen.



CFP Photo

A peek into the mind of a genius

By Chu Meng

The Historical Museum of Bern and the Swiss Embassy last Sunday unveiled "Albert Einstein (1879-1955)" at the China Science and Technology Museum, an exhibition on the life and times of Albert Einstein that is touring China in celebration of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of Sino-Swiss diplomatic relations.

The exhibition consists of more than 200 objects, including the Nobel laureate's personal effects and publications and documentaries about scientific developments in the 20th century. Its animated films, simulated lab experiments and multimedia presentations explain in an engaging, easy-to-understand manner the revolutionary theories of the man regarded as "the father of modern physics."



A replica of Einstein's dorm room when he was a student at the Swiss Polytechnic University in Zurich around 1901.

Photos by Zhang Ying



Einstein's cousin Elsa became his second wife.



A Longines pocket watch Einstein used to formulate his theory on space and time in 1905.



The section Wonder Year in 1905 discusses Einstein's revolutionary physics theories.

Unsociable, patient child

Through a dim, zigzagging tunnel made of mirrors and filled with photos of Albert Einstein, visitors learn the beginnings of the scientist hailed by *TIME* magazine as the "person of the 20th century."

Einstein was born in Ulm, now a part of Germany, on March 14, 1879. His mother Pauline came from a well-to-do family, whose father was a grain supplier working for the local government. His father Hermann, a worker in a small bedding factory, came from a humbler background. When Einstein was a year old, the family moved to Munich, at that time the busiest city in Germany.

When Einstein was 6, his father established a factory that built electronic power stations and lighting installations. It was the factory that provided the first electric light for the Oktoberfest, Munich's famed beer festival, in 1885, thus bringing the Einsteins local fame. Albert learned the basics of physics while playing at his father's factory.

This section of the exhibition features a brass compass, a set of toy blocks and playing cards – presents for the young Albert from his father. He was given the compass to comfort him one time he fell ill. The movement of the metal needle fascinated the boy, and he stared at the compass for days, wanting to understand what laid behind this "miracle."

Though Einstein was an unsocial child and began speaking only at age 3, he showed perseverance in accomplishing tasks. At 9, he built a 14-story house of cards and later, buildings with complicated designs using his toy blocks.

Story of young love

Einstein moved to Switzerland at 15, and there enjoyed school for the first time because of the country's liberal system of

education and serious but non-dictatorial style of teaching.

At 17, he was accepted into the math and natural sciences department at the Swiss Polytechnic University in Zurich, one of the country's best universities. He got the highest ever score in the entrance exams at the time and was the youngest student accepted to the school. There he fell in love with a classmate and the only woman in his class, Mileva Maric.

The exhibition recreates Einstein's dorm room in Zurich, a green wooden house with simple wooden furniture: a desk, a single bed and a cabinet. On the desk stands a row of books, ink, paper and pens. Einstein was known for keeping his desk clean and tidy throughout his life.

It was in that dorm room that Einstein and Maric studied together and discussed questions related to math and physics. Maric, who herself displayed a talent for math and physics at a young age, came from Austria-Hungary, where women were not allowed to enter university. Fortunately, her rich father supported her desire to get a degree. Einstein and Maric married in 1903 and had three children.

A copy of their divorce announcement tells the sad ending of the couple's love story. They divorced in 1919, while Einstein was already years into an affair with a cousin, Elsa Einstein. Their love letters are displayed next to the divorce decree.

Revolutionary scientific ideas

The most thought-provoking section of the exhibition is "Wonder Year of 1905," which shows Einstein's achievements in physics through short films, simulated laboratory experiments and interactive models. It discusses his ground-breaking theories about the speed of light, the photoelectric effect, the Brownian Motion, as

well as his Special Theory of Relativity and probably the world's most popular scientific formula, $E=mc^2$. The use of modern technology makes this exhibition engaging and exciting.

Use of the latest audio-visual technology like telescopic imagery and film effects show visitors the diversity and breath-taking beauty of the universe via, and seem to take them back to the beginning of time.

But the exhibition's scene stealer is a bicycle used in Einstein's numerous experiments toward determining the speed of light. He believed that if a person moved at the speed of light, the scene he would see would be optical distortions. Though the bicycle "reduced" the speed of light from 300,000 kilometer per second to 30 kilometer per hour, the ride distorted the images he saw and helped prove his theory. The bicycle on display is connected to a screen that shows the street from Einstein's house to his workplace in the Federal Patent Office in Zurich.

In 1921, Einstein was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics for his contributions to theoretical physics and for explaining the photoelectric effect.

The exhibition will tour China through October, making stops in Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Shanghai. The Swiss government also plans to hold a series of science activities and lectures to accompany the exhibition.

The China Science and Technology Museum

Where: 5 Beichen Dong Lu (500 meters north of the Bird's Nest), Chaoyang District

Open: 9 am – 4:30 pm

Tel: 5904 1000

Admission: Free

Retreat to a pottery workshop

By Liang Meilan

Beijingers wanting relief from the pressures of city life can turn to Taowill Club, a new resort in Changping District that offers vacationers pottery-making classes in an environment steeped in art and nature.



Mental and physical enjoyment

Taowill Club's guests easily miss its inconspicuous, grey-brick front gate next to some rundown buildings on Dingsi Road.

"But that is what makes the club special," owner Gong Shanbin said. "We don't want to attract throngs of people by having a grand exterior. We hope guests will come again because they have enjoyed the tranquil atmosphere."

Guests are made to forget the outside world the moment they step through the gates, since the way to the main building is through a maze with three entrances and which is lined with ceramic murals.

"I love this feeling of suspending the thought of everything but going through the maze," Wei Jianghui, a guest, said. "It's also heightening my curiosity about the place."

After navigating the maze, a world of porcelain awaits. A small bridge over a man-made stream leads to the front yard, which contains the wooden pottery workshop.

In the workshop are 10 wheel-throwing machines and three kilns that guests can use to make pottery under the guidance of five artisans.

"Pottery making begins with throwing, which defines the shape of the work," said Jiang Haibin, a 25-year-old artisan who just graduated from art school. "This process is a test of patience, creativity and skill. Different wares require different spinning speeds, different pressures from the hand and even different postures, which makes it an 'artistic workout.'"

Handling the fine and smooth clay, mixed with cool water, is good for blood circulation in the hands, Jiang said. "Touching and shaping earth makes people feel closer to nature, and this is what city dwellers need."

The next step in pottery making is to

put decorations on the body by sculpting and drawing. Guests who are not confident in their skills can pass on the work to the artisans. "We ask guests what designs they want and we make it for them," Jiang said. Guests can then take their creations home.



An artisan demonstrates throwing.



The 1,170-C medium temperature oven
Photos provided by Taowill

The workshop fee is 60 yuan per hour. Membership cards are available for 200 yuan, which give customers a 75 percent discount.

Pottery feast

Across from the workshop is a two-story building decorated with a porcelain-tile mosaic. On the first floor is a Western-style lounge in which guests can enjoy a cup of tea or coffee in the main hall or in private rooms while background music plays. The walls of the main hall are lined with shelves filled

with various pottery items, including vases, ash-trays, tea sets, candlesticks and rings.

All the products on display were made by artisans in Jingdezhen, a city in Jiangxi Province known as the country's "porcelain capital" since ancient times. All the items are for sale, at prices ranging from 30 yuan to several hundreds of yuan.

The second floor contains a restaurant that serves both Western and Chinese food. It is notable for its beautiful interior design: four different wall patterns in porcelain tiles and a meter-long "tadpole river" under the transparent floor tiles, featuring fat tadpoles. The restaurant has 30 dining tables, which makes it ideal for birthday parties and wedding receptions.

A path lined with green, leaf-shaped porcelain leads to Taowill's backyard. It contains a two-story building that houses a conference room, a movie-screening room and another porcelain workshop. Under the nearby trees are a pavilion and several outdoor coffee tables. Not far off is a wooden grill house that can accommodate 30 people.

The most interesting aspect of the club can be seen from the backyard: no two building tiles have the same design of blue, green and white porcelain.

"This is a well-known wall pattern designed for the Qingdao Seaquarium," Xu Qiuhua, the club's planning manager, said. "Its design team gave us their remaining materials and helped us make these." The creations of famous ceramic artists are also on display in the garden and by the roadside.

Art for professionals and amateurs

China pioneered porcelain making, but sadly, it has begun losing its

global advantage.

"Very few porcelains made by Chinese artists stand out in world competitions," Gong said, adding that he set up Taowill so that professional porcelain makers have an avenue to practice their craft, amateur artists have a place to hone their skills and enthusiasts have a space for lectures and exchanges.

Taowill is currently the only workshop of its kind in the capital with top-grade equipment such as a full set of porcelain ovens: low-, medium- and high-temperature kilns of 700, 1,170 and 1,330 C, respectively. The three ovens are needed to produce porcelain with varying degrees of hardness and thickness.

"Porcelain making is a complex craft that involves nine procedures accomplished by a team of artisans. These including throwing, shaping, sculpture and glaze firing," Gong said. He said the workshop uses only high-quality raw materials such as clay transported from Jingdezhen. Other glazing and painting products are provided by established suppliers.

Some of Taowill's workers come all the way from Jingdezhen. "Producing porcelain with the help of artisans from Jingdezhen gives our guests a feeling of achievement and contentment," Gong said with a smile.

Besides regular porcelain workshops, the club also holds exhibitions, competitions, cultural exchange activities and movie screenings. But Taowill's most popular activity is a workshop involving both parent and child.

"Children love playing with clay, and with the help of their parents, the kids can have fun while producing art," Gong said.

Taowill Club

Where: 184 Dingsi Lu, Changping District

Getting there: Take Subway Line 5 to Tiantongyuan station, then hop on a taxi for a five-minute ride to Taowill Club

Tel: 8975 4331

Dining



Summer Escape

This beer garden in the middle of the city is the place to beat the summer heat. This year there is the added excitement of Happy Hour live screenings of the 2010 World Cup. Cheer on your favorite team while you put away some BBQ snacks and beer; top off the night with a raffle, fun games and gifts.

Where: Park Plaza Beer Garden, 97 Jinbao Jie, Dongcheng District

When: 5:30 pm – midnight, May 15 – September 15

Tel: 8522 1999 ext. 3607



Garden + BBQ

After a long, chilly winter, Shangri-la's Garden Bar & Terrace opens once again. With its traditional pavilions and furnishings, few spots compare in terms of tranquility and style. The Garden will be extra special on Saturdays till the end of September. Every Saturday, chefs will venture outdoors to cook up special BBQ dinners to help guests get into the swing of summer. The grilled meats will be supplemented by fresh salads, cheeses, fruits and free beer.

Where: Shangri-la Hotel Beijing, 29 Zizhuyuan Lu, Haidian District

Cost: 498 yuan per person with soft drinks and local beer (15 percent surcharge)

Tel: 6841 2211 ext. 6770



Taste of Campania

Don't miss the perfect time to enjoy traditional Italian flavors and savor the authentic Campania taste at Da Giorgio. Food from Campania, one of Italy's most southern regions, is in many ways the best in the country. Many dishes native to Campania have been adopted by the rest of Italy. Chef Giovanni, a native of Campania's capital, Naples, will introduce the traditional

dishes of his home region including eggplant parmigiana and basil; buffalo mozzarella, sun-dried tomato and arugula pesto; spaghetti, clams and lemon zest; and snapper "Acqua Pazza" with mashed potato and stewed fava beans.

Where: Da Giorgio, Grand Hyatt Beijing, 1A Dong Chang'an Jie, Dongcheng District

When: until June 12, 11:30 am – 2:30 pm (Monday to Friday), 5:30–10 pm (Monday to Sunday)

Tel: 8518 1234 ext. 6024

The Dragon Boat Festival

The Dragon Boat Festival is coming. To celebrate this traditional festival, Jianguo Hotel is preparing delicious *zongzi*, including ones with sweet and healthy fillings.

Where: Jianguo Hotel Beijing, 5 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: June 16

Tel: 6500 2233



Afternoon treats

There is a haven of tranquility even in the heart of CBD: the graceful Lobby Lounge at the majestic China World Hotel. Step in and discover a place where classical music feeds the soul and delectable high-tea treats tantalize the taste buds. Enjoy exquisite afternoon tea treats in a luxurious surrounding. The sets offer selections that include delectable scones and clotted cream, sandwiches and traditional Chinese snacks.

Where: Lobby Lounge, China World Hotel, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

Cost: 158 to 188 yuan (15 percent surcharge)

Tel: 6505 5838



Meal for your hero on Father's Day

Show your appreciation for your favorite "macho man" by taking him out of the everyday rush and treating him to a slap-up Sunday lunch at One East. Soak up the carefree ambience and unlimited servings of roast beef rib carved at your table side. The three-course set menu offers a wide selection of appetizers and desserts that revive American classics with contemporary flair. The wine buffet, with bourbon whiskies and premium wines from head sommelier Julia Zhu, makes the day a salutation to fatherhood!

Where: One East, Hilton Beijing, 1 Dongfang Lu, Dongsanhuan Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

When: June 20, noon – 3 pm

Cost: 178 yuan for three courses, add 98 yuan for wine buffet (15 percent surcharge)

Tel: 5865 5030

Aviation

Recreate gourmet meals with Singapore Airlines cookbook

Imagine cooking elegant and mouth-watering restaurant-style meals at home with the guidance of celebrity chefs every step of the way. With Singapore Airlines' first ever cookbook, *Above and Beyond: A Collection of Recipes from the Singapore Airlines International Culinary Panel*, aspiring cooks can easily and confidently whip up sumptuous gourmet meals in the comfort of their own homes. Local customers may purchase it in Changi Airport starting July 10. Customers overseas may purchase the cookbook online at krishshop.com (free delivery for purchases before December 31) or from the June-August edition of the KrisShop catalogue.

Events

Art exhibition from documentary

Classic and Immortal, a new documentary, records 60 contemporary artists' activities and achievements during the past 60 years to show how art has developed since the founding of the People's Republic.

The artists will exhibit their paintings featured in the documentary at the Hall of Chinese Peoples Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) through this Friday.

The documentary has been broadcast on CCTV and Hong Kong's Phoenix TV. It was produced by China Film Association, National Art Museum of China and Huaxia Hanmo Company.

(By Zhang Dongya)

Hotel

Nobility of Nature

Marriott International is starting Nobility of Nature, a water conservation initiative. Marriott International will fund the Pingwu Water Conservation Fund to protect the largest source of fresh water on the planet, located in China's Sichuan Province, an area hit hard by the 2008 earthquake.

Visit marriott.com.cn/default.mi for more information.

Spa

Active whitening facial treatment

"Nanometer Scraping" is a technique used to brighten dark skin and balance discoloration. It also removes toxic substances, stimulates cutaneous respiration and improves skin elasticity. Kempinski Hotels Shenyang is very glad to offer SPA treatments which include body massage and facial treatments with a special discount of 33 percent off the original price between 10 am and 5 pm.

Where: Kempinski Hotel Shenyang, 109 Qingnian Jie, Shenhe District, Shenyang

Cost: 590 yuan for 90 minutes

Tel: 024 2298 8988

GTA to host 'Visit North America' roadshow

GTA by Travelport, a wholesaler of ground content, announced this week that GTA Americas is hosting a Visit North America Road Show in China this June. The roadshow, to be held in Shanghai and Beijing between June 21 and 26, will bring together North American representatives of convention and visitor bureaus, destination marketing organizations and travel suppliers. Destination presentations and networking seminars form a main part of the roadshow.

Visit gta-travel.com for more information.

(By Sun Feng)

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

Making an appearance at the eleventh hour

By Han Manman

Last Saturday was a big day for Wang Jie. After two months of competition, he was finally playing in the final round of a street basketball tournament, an annual amateur sporting competition in Beijing that came with a generous cash prize.

Having played basketball since primary school, the 19-year-old Wang was confident he could win the championship. He imagined using the prize money to travel to Egypt this fall, a trip he had long dreamed of making.

He knew the key to winning was finding an equally talented partner in the game of pairs, so he asked John, an American friend. Wang was confident he and John would be hard to beat on the court – and he was right.

Wang and John's final game was set for 10 am last Saturday, and they agreed to meet an hour earlier. But a few minutes past 9 am and there was still no word from John. Wang started becoming anxious, so he rang his teammate. John answered on the sixth ring, sounding like he had been roused from sleep.

Wang panicked and told John it was only an hour till the game started.

"Hey, man, calm down. Listen to me," John said. "You don't need to worry. I'll appear at the eleventh hour, understand?"

"Eleventh hour? You say you will come on the eleventh hour? Are you crazy?" Wang roared. "The match starts at 10 am! Are you trying to mess with me!?" He hung up the phone.

Wang immediately regretted trusting John so much he did not think it was necessary to find a substitute player in case of an emergency like this.



"Maybe I'll just back out of the competition," Wang thought, feeling crushed.

While he was contemplating how to tell the game officials he was withdrawing from the competition, John appeared.

"Hey, I thought you were not coming until the eleventh hour. It's only 9:30 am, you're very early," Wang said sarcastically.

John finally understood the reason for Wang's outburst. He explained that "eleventh hour" did not mean he was going to come at 11 am, but that he would do so at the last moment before the game

started. "Eleventh hour means the last moment before something happens," he said.

For example, John said, he once thought he had lost out on a job he really wanted because he didn't hear from the company weeks after his interview. But at the eleventh hour, when he was just about to accept a job elsewhere, the company called to say they wanted to hire him, John said.

Wang realized he had overreacted and apologized to John. The day ended just as Wang had envisioned, with him and John holding the champion's trophy.

Blacklist

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week.

1. National Society provides excellent training for its staff.

Native Speaker Terry Boyd-Zhang (TZ): In English, the use of articles such as "the," "a," and "an" is a very difficult skill to master. "The" indicates a specific item and "a" or "an" indicates an item in general. If you can answer the question 'which one?' then you probably need to use the article "the." In the sentence above, we can ask "which society?" There is only one National Society and so you should add a "the": The National Society provides excellent training for its staff.

Here is a simpler example: "Pass me the book that is on the table." The meaning is that there is only one book, the one you want, and only one table. "Pass me a book that is on the table" means that there are many books on the table and you are not fussy about which book you get, any one will do. The best way to learn about articles is to use them: read, watch movies, talk with native speakers ... they just take practice!

2. The National Society has provided training in rural areas since the year 2006.

TBZ: Adding "the year" is a direct translation from Chinese. While not always wrong, it may start to sound awkward in English, especially in a longer article where the phrase is repeated several times.

On the same note: "Dalian City, Liaoning Province" is not incorrect. It may even be helpful to clarify a location, especially if you are speaking with an audience unfamiliar with China's cities and provinces. On the other hand, I cannot think of a time that I would say, "Toronto City, Ontario Province."

3. Since 2006, the National Society has provided training in rural areas.

TBZ: "This sentence looks the same as the sentence above!" you cry. Yes, the difference is one of emphasis. When people are reading or listening, they tend to remember the last thing, so the important thing goes at the end of the sentence. So, the sentence in #2 emphasizes the year; 2006 is important information and 2006 is what you want the reader to remember. In this sentence, 2006 is at the beginning and the important message is the "training in rural areas."

Changing the positioning of the date may also help the reader or listener pay attention. If the date is always at the end, it may start to sound repetitive and your audience may become bored.

4. The volunteer campaign selected 14 delegates to attend the conference.

TBZ: The problem with this sentence is that a "campaign" cannot "select." This is a very common mistake, even among native speakers, and it often escapes the editor's eye. One way to fix this might be to say: "The volunteer campaign's selection committee chose 14 delegates to attend the conference."

You have to make sure the verb is an action that the subject can actually perform. For example: "The school threw a party" is incorrect because a school cannot do much except wait for students to enter it! However, "The graduating students threw a party at the school" is perfectly acceptable.

5. Could you tell me the name of your reference?

TBZ: There is nothing wrong with this sentence. The problem was one of context. My English friend, as she understood it, was asked to provide a reference to a possible local employer. She emailed her former employer and a couple of colleagues who submitted letters of reference, telling of my friend's reliability, work ethic, and all-round good employability. It turned out that references were not required. The question was: "Who referred you to my company?" In other words, "Who told you that I was looking for a new employee?"

Sometimes it is best to say things in plain, simple English. You don't need to use fancy words (or complicated grammar) when easier words in a straightforward sentence will do.

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to wangyu2008@ynet.com together with your name and address.

Vice chairman of what!?

By Tiffany Tan

This can be easily mistaken for the office of someone running a fly-by-night operation. I do not blame you for thinking this, since some of the words on the doorplate are not even English. What's "fu" anyway? Or "wei"?

Well, what you're looking at is actually the office of the vice chairman of the National Working Committee on Children and Women (NWCCW), a government body under the State Council that oversees women's and children's affairs.

It is described on a government website as playing an "important



role in coordinating and promoting relevant government departments to do women and children's work well, as well as in formulating and organizing the implementation of

the outlines for the development of women and children." The committee is supposed to supervise "the work of its subordinates in all provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government."

This Chinglish sign is quite shocking, considering the office in which it's located. But it's also an ingenious way for someone not to be found by foreign visitors; after all, it's a "working committee" and you cannot expect people but to be too busy to entertain pesky guests.

Dear John (2010)

Movie of the week

A story of love and commitment

I went to see this movie after a friend recommended it. The recommendation was spot on: it perfectly captured the pain of loving someone who is on active duty in the military.

The theme of commitment in the movie runs in three paths – to one's loved one, to one's duty and to those whose family members need care.

It is a beautiful movie; co-star Amanda Seyfried showed off her many talents by singing some of the movie's soundtracks.

Some movie reviewers who read the book were disappointed with the film, but bestselling books and their film adaptations rarely run in parallel; those movies that do follow a book 100 percent usually end up a disappointment like *Flags of our Fathers*.

Synopsis

Special Forces Army Sergeant John Tyree is home on a two-week leave from Germany. He meets Savannah Curtis after he dives into the ocean to retrieve Savannah's purse that falls off the pier.

John is smitten by Savannah and falls in love at first sight. She is a college student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, who is on spring break and is helping build a house for the charity Habitat for Humanity. John decides to give her a hand.

Along the way romance blooms and Savannah falls deeply in love with John. As she is about to go back to college, she promises to write John overseas during the next year until he returns to her after completing his enlistment. Their love is put to the test when John reenlists after the 9/11 attack.

Scene 1:

At the beach

Randy (R): You in the military or something?

John (J): Yeah.

R: Really?

J: Mm-hm.

R: What branch are you in?

J: Army, Special Forces.

R: Oh, Special Forces. That's impressive. Is that like a Special Forces ring they give you? Is that what it says on it? It looks nice on you. Aren't you supposed to be wearing a hat too? Like a French hat, a beret. Right? That's what it's called?

Savannah (S): Randy. Randy?

R: What? I'm just joking with him.

S: You shouldn't make fun of a guy who can kill you with his bare hands.

R: Oh-ho! Big guy. **Rock them, sock them (1)**, let's go. You know, I'm gonna go get a beer. Soldier?

J: Pleasure.

S: He thinks he likes me.

J: Yeah, I think he likes you too.

S: No, I'm not his type. He just doesn't know it yet.

J: Mm-hm.

S: What?

J: Come on, I just think you're probably everybody's type.

Scene 2:

On John's way home

Tim (T): Hey.

J: Hey, man.

T: We're headed into town for some ice cream.

You want a ride?

J: No, no, no, it's fine. I don't mind walking at all. It's fine. Heh.

T: Sure?

J: All right. I appreciate it.

T: Yeah. Hey, Alan, move on over here. Here, I'll undo your belt.

J: So how long y'all in town for?

T: Oh, we live here **year-round (2)** now. We were driving down every weekend anyways, so I finally just convinced my wife this just made the most sense.

J: Mm. She didn't want ice cream?

T: Who? Oh, my wife?

J: Mm-hm.

T: Uh, no. No, actually she's on vacation herself. It's kind of difficult to take trips together. It's fine. We make it work.

J: I'm up here on the left.

T: Hey, uh, John. **For the record (3)**, if you do anything to hurt Savannah, I'm gonna have to break something. Something in your leg. Some ... One of the bones in there.

J: Okay.

T: It's just I know her father and he would expect me to say something like that. It'd just sound a lot more natural coming out of his mouth.

J: It sounded fine.



Scene 3:

At the beach

J: Where you been all day?

Savannah (S): I've been busy.

J: You're on spring break. You're supposed to be lounging on the beach all day. You're not supposed to be busy doing things.

S: I want to show you something. *[John and Savannah enter a house which is still under construction.]* The family that lived here, their home was severely damaged by the hurricane.

J: What, so now you're rebuilding it?

S: Yup. Well, not just me.

J: You're starting to make me a little nervous.

S: Why am I starting to make you nervous?

J: Because I'm starting to think you might be too good of a person for me.

S: Oh. No, I'm not that good of a person.

J: You're **sneaking off (4)** every day to do manual labor on a house for charity. On your spring break.

S: Yeah, you're right. It's selfish, really, me being this generous.

J: But no, seriously. You don't drink, you don't smoke.

S: Nope. Nope.

J: You probably don't **sleep around (5)**.

S: Absolutely not.

J: Mm. Okay, look, you gotta have a fault.

S: I do.

J: Okay, care to enlighten me?

S: I curse.

J: No.

S: I do.

J: No, you don't.

S: Yes, I do.

J: I haven't heard you.

S: Well, that's because it's in my mind. There's a never-ending stream of curse words that I'm thinking at all times.

J: Okay, fine, just say one then.

S: No, I can't tell you because it's **filthy (6)**.

J: Okay, all right. Fair enough.

S: No, I have faults, John. Trust me, I have plenty of them. You'll see.

J: I hope so.

Vocabulary

1. **rock them, sock them:** have a big fight

2. **year-round:** happening or continuing throughout the year

3. **for the record:** to speak seriously

4. **sneak off:** leave furtively and stealthily

5. **sleep around:** to be sexually active with more than one partner.

6. **filthy:** disgustingly dirty

(By Huang Daohen)